

Crossroads: commemorative names in East Berlin, 1990 – 2010

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by

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Abstract

The memorial landscape has been a focal point in recent studies concentrating on post-socialist Central and Eastern Europe. This thesis contributes to this field by examining the names, naming, and renaming of former German Democratic Republic (GDR) streets, squares, and parks in East Berlin between 1990 and 2010. Political aspirations to influence Germany's national memory and identity have been overtly present in the alteration of East Berlin's memorial landscape. Contrasting narratives in the cityscape emerged as each political party –Christian Democratic Union (CDU), Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), and the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD)– assumed authority in the process of naming and renaming. While the political parties had overt control in the process, these debates over commemorative names was also taken up by and affected the lives of ordinary citizens. This thesis applies Owen Dwyer and Derek Alderman's holistic approach to reading Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg's landscape to analyse how inherited socialist dedications were re-interpreted (*text*), debated (*arena*), and protested (*performance*). A number of case studies in two East Berlin districts, Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg, highlight the competing versions of the past that emerged after the demise of the GDR. Mitte became a locus of contention in the battle over commemorative naming because the district was the political centre of a new German democracy. Prenzlauer Berg, a neighbouring district of Mitte, underwent similar disputes over its inherited GDR commemorative names but had very different outcomes. The aim of such a comparative study is to exemplify the power struggles surrounding commemorative names and how political parties and ordinary citizens use them to claim the right to retell the past.

Abbreviations

BVV	Bezirksverordnetenversammlung(en)
CDU	Christian Democratic Union
CSU	Christian Social Union of Bavaria
FDP	Free Democratic Party
FDJ	Free German Youth
GDR	German Democratic Republic
ICP	The International Communist Party
KPD	German Communist Party
NDP	National Democratic Party
NKFD	National Committee for a Free Germany
NSDAP	National Socialist German Workers Party
PDS	Party of Democratic Socialism
SED	Socialist Unity Party of Germany
SPD	Social Democratic Party of Germany
VOS	Vereinigung der Opfer des Stalinismus [Association of the Victims of Stalinism]

Definitions

Bezirk(e) is often used in this thesis instead of borough, locale or district because a precise German translation is not possible in English. A Bezirk(e) is a German city district, which has administrative functions and responsibilities to self-govern. Each Bezirk(e) has a district office and a district mayor.

Translation note

Unless otherwise noted or cited, all translations from German in this thesis are my own.

Introduction

The city of Berlin has been an important reference point for German history and identity. For two centuries, its statues, monuments, and street and square names have been repeatedly changed to reflect the attitudes and opinions of successive generations. The Hohenzollern dynasty [1871 – 1918] was the first German regime to inscribe its ideology onto Berlin's street and square names. The leaders and officials of this era labelled the physical landscape according to the dominant militaristic and nationalistic narrative of the *Kaiserreich*. Before 1918, for example, the two historical figures who were most frequently commemorated in street names were Kaiser Wilhelm I and Otto von Bismarck, the founder of the Second Reich. After the overthrow of the monarchy, the names of streets and squares were reconsidered in the light of the changed political conditions. The leadership of the Weimar Republic discussed possible ways of renaming streets in Berlin in order to embody the democratic aspirations of the new regime. However, in the end very few changes were made to the physical landscape. Instead of imposing their own democratic narrative on Berlin's streets, Weimar leaders continued to use the commemorative signs inherited from the *Kaiserreich*.¹ After 1933, by contrast, the Nazis renamed much of the city to mirror both their ideology and their own version of recent German history. The historian Rudy Koshar states:

Besides creating their own network of palpable and imaginary sites of memory, the Nazi party transformed, remade, or destroyed ... parts of the previous periods. No political regime in Germany had ever dealt more ruthlessly or comprehensively with the memory landscape than the Nazi government did.²

With the subsequent defeat of the Nazis in 1945, the victorious Allied powers divided Germany into four zones of occupation, and Berlin into four sectors. Even though the city's infrastructure was in ruins, the ghosts of the Nazi regime were still present in the names of Berlin's streets and squares. In May 1945, the Allied Control Council discussed

¹ Rudy Koshar, *From Monuments to Traces* (Berkeley, 2000), p. 91.

² *Ibid.*, p. 122.

methods of removing these remnants of Nazism.³ All four powers agreed that the Nazi names had to be removed, but the Soviets wanted to take the process a step further by eliminating all names that honoured Prussian militarism. The Soviets composed a list of 1,785 streets, 89 squares, 9 parks, and 17 bridges to be renamed.⁴ The Soviets, and their underlings in the German Communist Party (KPD), argued for the creation of a brand new streetscape that was free from the old traditional German veneration of the culture of war.⁵

The outbreak of the Cold War divided Germany into two parts. In 1949, the Soviet zone of occupation became known as the German Democratic Republic (GDR). The Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED), which was dominated by former Communists, and which in turn controlled the GDR government, constructed a narrative that described the country as an anti-fascist state. This story of resistance to Nazism was told in part through the naming of the GDR's streets, squares, and parks. The American, British, and French meanwhile, who controlled the other three zones of Germany as well as the other three sectors of Berlin, oversaw the creation in 1949 of a new West German state, the Federal Republic of Germany. The formation of the Federal Republic created a political structure that was based on democratic and federalist ideals.⁶ As a result, the West German government adopted a narrative that corresponded to its political and social agenda and was reflected in its commemorative practices.

On 3 October 1990 at 00:00 Central European Time, Germany witnessed the birth of yet another version of the German state, with the incorporation of East Germany into the Federal Republic to create a new, united country. Just as in 1945 when the commemorative names left over from the Nazi period had to be revised, so too after 1989, the commemorations left by the defunct socialist state had to be re-evaluated. The task of deciding which street, square, and park names to keep and which to discard or introduce, has been difficult and contentious. Despite formal unification on 3 October

³ Maoz Azaryahu, 'German reunification and the politics of street names: the case of East Berlin', *Political Geography*, 16:6 (1997), p. 483.

⁴ Ibid., p. 483.

⁵ Dieter Winkler and Harald Kintscher, 'Zur Geschichte der Strassen und Strassennamen im Bezirk' in Hermann Zech (ed.), *Hellersdorfer Heimathefte* (Berlin, 1992), p. 17.

⁶ Koshar, p. 149.

1990, Germany was still in many ways a deeply divided country. It proved difficult to form a new, collective German identity because of the political rifts between Left and Right, and between former West Germans and former East Germans.

One key theatre for the political battles between Right and Left, ‘Ossis’ and ‘Wessis’, was the struggle over the renaming of streets, squares, and parks in former East Berlin districts.⁷ In 1991, the German Bundestag voted 338 to 320 to move the German capital from Bonn to Berlin.⁸ After this vote, Berlin became the focus of national and international attention. Many of the commemorative names in Berlin, however, were antithetical to the new Republic because they referred to GDR politicians, old Communists, or GDR border guards who had shot East German citizens attempting to escape. For many, these names clearly needed to be changed. This problem was particularly severe in the central district of Berlin, Mitte, which was the home of the national government and the showcase of the new Germany. While many of the GDR-era street and square names were altered in Berlin-Mitte after 1990, Prenzlauer Berg, a suburb neighbouring that of Mitte, retained the greater part of its GDR commemorations. This thesis seeks to explain this difference and to demonstrate through a comparison of the two districts how the battle over the Berlin cityscape was an extension of the memory politics taken up by the various German political actors and ordinary citizens since 1945.

⁷ ‘Ossis’ and ‘Wessis’ are common German slang for East Germans and West Germans. These labels were often used in countless jokes and cultural references. The terms, however, are mostly used in an informal, derogatory context. Germans from both sides of the former Berlin Wall would use these words to exemplify the negative aspects of East and West German cultural, political and social lifestyle.

⁸ Stephen Kinzer, ‘Berlin to regain full capital role’, *New York Times*, 21 June 1991.

Chapter One

Memory in the landscape

Commemorative names represent various parts of a society's past. Dedications usually comprise three specific features: people, events, and geographical locations. By looking at a map or examining any landscape, rural or urban, one can notice the number of commemorative names attached to streets, squares, parks, and everyday places. Generations of people who live in urban areas create strata of meanings to compose a city's physiognomy. These commemorative names form an elaborate web of political, cultural, and social ideologies attached to public spaces. They are often dedicated to a variety of ideals that present the multifariousness of historical representations. As Catherine Nash discusses:

Names in the landscape are both material and metaphorical, substantive and symbolic - read, spoken, mapped, catalogued and written in everyday intimate and official bureaucratic geographies of road signs, street names and address - are all about questions of power, culture, location and identity.¹

Commemorative names in the landscape are in essence never passive codes that are only used for orientation. Rather they are directly linked to national, local, and regional methods of outlining memory and history in public spaces. Commemorative names in the landscape, thus, become not only sites of memory [*Lieux de mémoire*]; they often transcend this memory and represent the power struggles between groups who attach their particular recollection of the past to the cityscape.

Melissa Gould's rendition of New York City provides an example of how people construct space, place, and memory. In her drawing, the cityscape is superimposed with Berlin street, square, park, and subway names from the Nazi era. The renaming of New York, as 'Neu York', is an attempt to imagine the cityscape had the Nazis succeeded in spreading their ideology across the Atlantic.² Instead of walking around in New York's popular Chelsea Park, one is in Horst Wessel Park, a dedication to the leading figure and

¹ Catherine Nash, 'Irish Place names: post-colonial locations', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series*, 24:4 (1999), p. 457.

² Melissa Gould, 'Neu York', <http://www.megophone.com/neuyork.html>, (accessed 18 October 2011).

martyr of the early Nazi movement. Melissa Gould's map of 'Neu York' highlights the general point that the replacement of one set of commemorative names with another in the landscape is a means of staking a territorial claim (Figure 1). It also makes apparent the manner in which naming and political memory influence how the past is either remembered or forgotten.

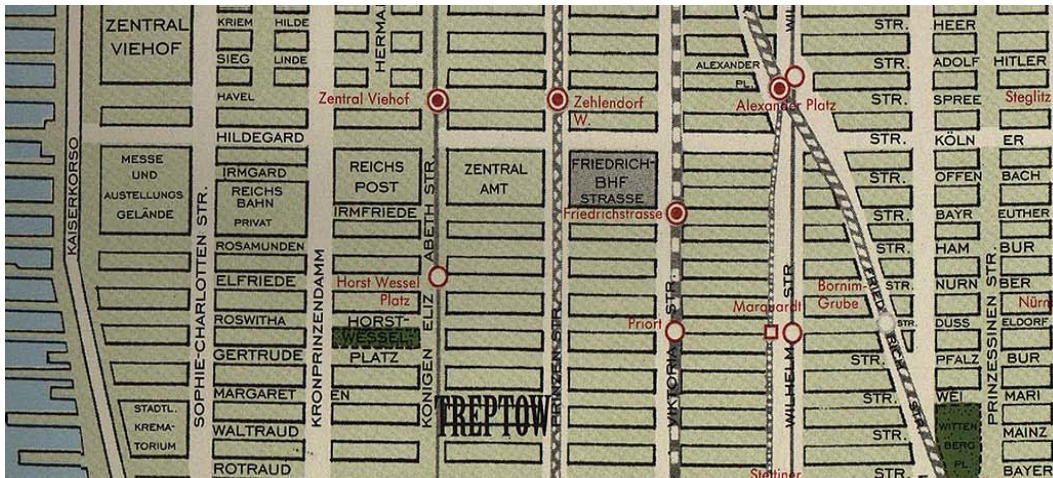


Figure 1: Melissa Gould's 'Neu York'.

In this chapter, I set out to do four things. First, I review the literature relevant to commemorative name studies and this thesis. Second, I examine the theoretical frameworks of commemorative names studies as used in two fields, cultural geography and memory studies. Third, I identify how this thesis plans to expand on the previous scholarship conducted within commemorative name studies. Finally, I discuss the methods, sources, and potential strengths and weaknesses of my approach.

Historiography

There are a number of significant studies in the social sciences and humanities dedicated to the power struggles over commemorations in the landscape. Many deal with the cityscape in its entirety by looking at buildings, memorials, museums, and statues. Brian Ladd, David Lowenthal, Jennifer Jordan, Kathryn Mitchell, and Karen Till have all written about how groups change or preserve meanings attached to elements in the cityscape.³ Much of the discussion considers those actors who reshape dedications in the

³ Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin* (Chicago, 1997); David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge, 1985); Jennifer Jordan, *Structures of Memory: understanding urban change in Berlin and*

urban environment to create their version of the past. Additionally, Amy Mills, William Neill, and Sharon Zukin have all focused on how individuals and social groups alter the urban landscape to construct their perspective on national identity.⁴ Others, such as Borden Painter, have written on how political parties and leaders establish memory in the cityscape. Painter's impressive account of Mussolini's rebuild of Rome looks at how Mussolini tore down previous symbols and buildings to reconstruct the more pristine parts of imperial Roman history. At the time of fascist awakening, this transformation of Rome was carried out in order to reinvent Italy's greatness and authority in Europe.⁵

Since 1990, there have been a number of noted geographers and historians who have focused on Berlin's cityscape as a centre of disputed political memory in the landscape. David Clay Large, Siobhan Kattago, Rudy Koshar, Bill Niven, Paul Stangl, and Karen Till have all provided leading commentary on post-war Berlin landscape studies.⁶ They have investigated the layers of Berlin's cityscape that were kept, forgotten, or revised post-World War Two and after German unity in 1990. With the broader aim of uncovering the transformation of Berlin throughout two centuries, Brian Ladd's extensive and well written study comments on the generational changes in Berlin's central district, Mitte.⁷ He highlights how politicised memory has played a role in the alterations and creations of memorials, museums, and buildings throughout the Prussian, Weimar, Nazi, and GDR periods as well as the current era of the Berlin Republic.⁸

The focus of another group of geographers and historians is the language and naming procedures manifested in the urban landscape. One particular focal point of these studies is on how commemorative names, like those assigned to streets, squares, and parks, act as

beyond (Stanford, 2006); Katharyne Mitchell, 'Monuments, Memorials, and the Politics of Memory', *Urban Geography*, 24:5 (2003), pp. 442 – 459; Karen Till, *The new Berlin: memory, politics, place* (Minneapolis, 2005).

⁴ Amy Mills, *Streets of memory: landscape, tolerance, and national identity in Istanbul* (Athens, 2010); William Neill, *Urban Planning and Cultural Identity* (New York, 2004); Sharon Zukin, *Landscapes of Power: From Detroit to Disney World* (Berkeley, 1991).

⁵ Borden Painter, *Mussolini's Rome: rebuilding the Eternal City* (New York, 2005).

⁶ Siobhan Kattago, *Ambiguous Memory*; Jennifer Jordan, *Structures of Memory*; Bill Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past: united Germany and the legacy of the Third Reich* (London, 2002); Paul Stangl, 'Restoring Berlin's Unter den Linden: ideology world view, place and space', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 32 (2006), pp. 352 – 376; Karen Till, *The new Berlin: memory, politics, place*.

⁷ Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin*.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 208 – 215.

a political and cultural discourse. Debates among groups occur when they compete over how commemorative names are written to remember or forget portions of the past. Saul Cohen and Nurit Kliot, J. Carlos Gonzalez Faraco and Michael Murphy, and Brenda Yeoh demonstrate how commemorative names serve as a tool for nation building.⁹ For instance, Yeoh illustrates in her study how numerous streets and squares in ‘post-colonial’ Singapore were replaced when the country gained independence from British rule. Many names in the city were changed from an overtly British perspective to names that reflected the heterogeneous ideologies of nationalism and multiracialism after it had de-colonised.¹⁰ Similarly, Kliot and Cohen’s article on Israeli naming procedures in the occupied territory of the West Bank points out that “naming is power – the creative power to call something into being, to render the invisible visible, to impart a certain character to things.”¹¹ Maoz Azaryahu, Graeme Gill, Duncan Light, and Emlie Palonen consider another perspective in this field.¹² The thematic concern in their studies examines the de-commemoration of street and square names after periods of revolution. The act of renaming objects in the cityscape is a means of cleansing old sets of ideologies and legitimising a new political system.¹³ Finally, Lawrence Berg and Robin Kearns as well as Derek Alderman and Reuben Rose-Redwood have written articles on how minority groups try to rewrite the landscape to reflect their version of the past.¹⁴ Because histories of underrepresented groups have, for the most part, been overlooked, ‘official’

⁹ Saul Cohen and Nurit Kliot, ‘Place-Names in Israel’s Ideological Struggle over the Administered Territories’, *American Geographers*, 82:4 (1992), pp. 653 – 680; J. Carlos Gonzalez Franco and Michael Dean Murphy, ‘Street Names and Political Regimes in an Andalusian Town’, *Ethnology*, 36:2 (1997), pp. 123 – 148; Brenda Yeoh, ‘Street-Naming and Nation-Building: Toponymic Inscriptions of Nationhood in Singapore’, *Area*, 28:3 (1996), pp. 298 – 307.

¹⁰ Yeoh, pp. 298 – 307.

¹¹ Cohen and Kliot, p. 5.

¹² Azaryahu, 1997; Graeme Gill, ‘Changing Symbols: The Renovation of Moscow Place Names’, *Russian Review*, 64:3 (2005), pp. 480 – 503; Duncan Light, ‘Street names in Bucharest, 1990 – 1997: exploring the modern historical geographies of post-socialist change’, *Historical Geography*, 30 (2004), pp. 154 – 172; Emlie Palonen, ‘The city-text in post-communist Budapest: street names, memorials, and the politics of commemoration’, *GeoJournal*, 73 (2008), pp. 219 – 230.

¹³ Azaryahu, 1997, p. 481.

¹⁴ Derek Alderman, ‘Street Names and the Scaling of Memory: The Politics of Commemorating Martin Luther King. Jr. within the African American Community’, *Area*, 35:2 (2003), pp. 163 – 173; Lawrence Berg and Robin Kearns, ‘Naming as norming: ‘race’, gender, and the identity politics of naming places in Aotearoa/New Zealand’, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 14 (1996), pp. 99 – 122; Reuben Rose-Redwood, ‘From number to name: symbolic capital, places of memory and the politics of street renaming in New York City’, *Social & Cultural Geography*, 9:4 (2008), pp. 431 – 452.

narratives have largely excluded minority groups from the landscape. Over time, a reinterpretation of the past leads to a variety of competing histories, memories and ideas about how to name the elements in the landscape.¹⁵

Even though all of these studies vary greatly in their findings and direction of research, all of them anchor their work in the discipline of history and are theoretically reliant on two fields, cultural geography and memory studies. By outlining these two fields, this thesis demonstrates the theoretical frameworks that are embedded in commemorative name studies as well as the ones used in this piece of research. A discussion of the scholarship set in cultural geography shows how the landscape acts as a 'text' to be deciphered. 'Text' refers to the reading and analysis of elements in the landscape as social expressions of symbols, icons, and metaphors.¹⁶ On many occasions, these spaces become battlegrounds between competing ideologies over how to represent the past. The second field to be surveyed is memory studies. The primary focus of this field of research is the idea of 'collective memory'. This type of memory refers to the complex negotiation of past events, people, and situations that relate to contemporary society. Two principal theorists are considered. First, this study highlights the work of Maurice Halbwachs, which has created the principal foundations of 'collective memory' theory. Second, this thesis considers Pierre Nora who has written extensively on the placement of memory in the landscape.

To begin with, there are a number of important publications in cultural geography that paved the way for commemorative name studies. Carl Sauer and the Berkeley School, who were fascinated with anthropological and German landscape studies, wrote the first monographs of cultural geography in the late 1920s. In their studies, they linked human production with the makings of culture in the natural landscape. A prominent feature of early studies in cultural geography was the fluid interaction between the landscape and society. Sauer and the Berkeley School postulated that the cultural landscape was 'superorganic'. As Sauer argued, "culture is the agent, landscape the medium, and the

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Linda McDowell, 'The transformation of cultural geography', in D. Gregory, R. Martin, and G. Smith (eds.), *Human Geography: Society, Space and Social Science* (London, 1994), pp. 146 – 173.

cultural landscape the result”.¹⁷ For instance, scholars looked at the formation of housing-types, field patterns, and log-cabin construction methods as artefacts in the landscape.¹⁸ From these studies, Sauer had conceptualised the landscape as not being environmentally determined, which was the principal theory at the time, but “derived from the mind of man.”¹⁹ Wilbur Zelinsky, a pupil of Sauer, explains culture as the reflection of what we produce and how we envisage the landscape we live in.²⁰ The initial scholarship of cultural geography, however, argued that culture is an “unconscious and conditioned habit” that forms the world around us.²¹ It limited the individual to a passive role, rather than acknowledging how the individual might actively participate in the process of shaping the world around them. Essentially the theory only explained “culture as a given, rather than a process”.²² Furthermore, culture was separated from all influential aspects of human existence, such as personality, art, economics, and politics.²³

In more recent times, cultural geographers, predominately from Britain and North America, have focused on the lack of concepts put forth by their earlier counterparts. The restructuring of cultural geography was a result of the neo-liberal globalisation that took place in the 1970s and the overall reformation of many fields in the social sciences and humanities. Moreover, changes to the social, political, and economic make up of the world affected how people lived their everyday lives as well as how people observed and shaped the world around them.²⁴ Incorporating theories from Raymond Williams, who stated that culture is ordinary but always political,²⁵ ‘new cultural geographers’ like James Duncan, Denis Cosgrove and Peter Jackson, suggest that instead of reading the landscape at its surface level, like Sauer and early cultural geographers had done, the

¹⁷ Carl Sauer, ‘The Morphology of Landscape’, in John Leighly (ed.), *Land and Life*, (Berkeley, 1963), p. 343.

¹⁸ Yvonne Whelan, ‘Monuments, power and contested space – the iconography of Sackville Street (O’Connell Street) before Independence (1922)’, *Irish Geography*, 34:1 (2001), p. 11.

¹⁹ Don Mitchell, *Cultural Geography: A Critical Introduction* (Malden, 2000), p. 27.

²⁰ Wilbur Zelinsky, *The Cultural Geography of the United States*, (Englewood Cliffs, 1973), pp. 69 – 71.

²¹ James Duncan, ‘Introduction’, in James Duncan, Nuala Johnson, and Richard Schein (eds.), *A Companion to Cultural Geography* (Malden, 2004), p. 15.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 15.

²³ Pamela Shurmer-Smith, *Worlds of Desire, Realms of Power* (New York, 1994), p. 5.

²⁴ Pamela Shurmer-Smith, *Doing Cultural Geography* (London, 2002), p. 1.

²⁵ Raymond Williams, ‘Culture is Ordinary’, in Ben Hughmore (ed.), *The Everyday Life Reader* (London, 2002) p. 93.

landscape itself needs to be addressed as it produces underlying meanings.²⁶ Their focus was directed towards the power struggles over representation. Spaces, as the ‘new cultural geographers’ argued, are composed of subtle constructions and relationships, which define the workings of competing groups in society. As Cosgrove emphasised, the “landscape is not merely the world we see; it is a construction, a composition of that world”, and even further, the result of those groups who transformed or retained parts of it.²⁷

The prime interest of ‘new cultural geographers’ has been on the investigation of symbolic productions of society, and the concepts that relate to the formation of space and power. In this way, the landscape, according to Geertzian theory, is a ‘text’ to be deciphered.²⁸ Trevor Barnes, James Duncan, and Cosgrove examine the ‘text’ metaphor as being cultural productions like maps and landscapes that establish reality instead of simply reflecting it.²⁹ Since these first concepts of ‘text’, Owen Dwyer and Derek Alderman have brought together a more holistic way of analysing the memorial landscape. They have claimed that the cityscape is divided into three metaphorical lenses: *text*, *arena*, and *performance*.³⁰ Dwyer and Alderman argued that the textual approach to studying monuments, memorials, and street names unravels the “stories manifested on and through the landscape”.³¹ The *text* uncovers the overall historical discourses to particular themes that change throughout time. Like reading a book, elements in the landscape provide different interpretations for contemporary groups as well as succeeding generations.³² As Stuart Hall clarifies, “meanings will always change from one culture or

²⁶ James Duncan and David Ley, ‘Introduction’, in James Duncan and David Ley (eds.), *Place/culture/representation* (London, 1993), p. 12; Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels, ‘Introduction: iconography and landscape’, in Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels (eds.), *The iconography of landscape* (New York, 1988).

²⁷ William Norton, *Cultural Geography* (New York, 2000), p. 289.

²⁸ Trevor Barnes and James Duncan, ‘Introduction: Writing Worlds’, in Trevor Barnes and James Duncan (eds.), *Writing Worlds: Discourse, Text and Metaphor in the Representation of Landscape* (London, 1992), p. 7.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

³⁰ Owen Dwyer and Derek Alderman, ‘Memorial landscapes: analytic questions and metaphors’, *GeoJournal*, 73 (2008), p. 165.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 171.

³² Mark Crinson, *Urban Memory: History and Amnesia in the Modern City* (London, 2005); Sharon Zukin, 1991.

period to another”.³³ Ensuing groups evaluate the markers in the landscape, and either accept, add to, or change previous meanings. For instance, a debate between numerous citizens and the city council in Glendale, California revolved around approximately 930 lampposts. The creation and placement of these lights occurred in the 1920’s and included two-inch by three-inch swastika designs that encircled the bases. This ideogram, an ancient symbol connoting ‘well and being’, predated the Nazis’ reign of power. Following the Second World War, however, the symbol on the lampposts, as many citizens argued, had come to connote hatred and to evoke remembrance of Nazi crimes.³⁴ Even through the designs were different, the Glendale swastikas moving in the opposite direction to those of the Nazis, the original meaning of these ideograms had been completely subsumed by the memory of the Nazis and their crimes.

The second metaphorical lens is *arena*. *Arenas* are the places where political and social actors debate over attaching their version of politicised memory to commemorations.³⁵ Memorials are one place in the landscape where discourse takes place over how to represent the past. Sofia, Bulgaria provides an instance in very recent history where a reinterpretation occurred in the streetscape intended to instil a new set of values. In June 2011 an artist(s) spray-painted over ‘The Monument to the Soviet Army’ in Bulgaria’s capital city (Figure 2). The original memorial, erected in 1954, portrays a group of armed Soviet soldiers. This statue heralds the Red Army as triumphantly and courageously defeating their opponents, the Nazis. The rival version, although short-lived, portrayed comic book characters like Captain America, along with Robin and the Joker from the comic book series *Batman*. In addition, Santa Claus and Ronald McDonald, a figure who is iconic to the fast-food chain McDonald’s and often associated with American corporatism, became part of a historicisation that splintered Bulgaria’s past and present ideologies. Underneath the refurbished monument was the phrase

³³ Stuart Hall, *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (London, 2003), p. 61.

³⁴ Glendale City Council, ‘Lampposts’, (Glendale, CA: Glendale City Council, 1995), <http://www.ci.glendale.ca.us/lampposts.asp>, (accessed 18 October 2011).

³⁵ Dwyer and Alderman, p. 173.

“moving with the times”.³⁶ While interpretations are multifarious, the artist(s) alludes to the fact that Bulgarians have moved beyond the past and now look towards new inspirations and ties to western culture. Bulgaria’s Prime Minister however, disagreed with the artist and claimed that the alteration to the memorial was an act of vandalism. Officials in Bulgaria and Russia lambasted the defilement as offensive, due to its occurrence on the seventieth anniversary of Operation Barbarossa, the German invasion of the Soviet Union. Although officials returned the monument to its original form, the change led to a re-assessment of the memorial’s message in contemporary Bulgarian society. The site, thus, became a contested space or *arena* in which opposing groups, who attached different meanings to the memorial, fought.



Figure 2: ‘The Memorial to the Soviet Army’ - Top photo of superimposed war memorial. Bottom photo of reverted original.

While memorials are one specific *arena*, whole landscapes can become a metaphorical *arena* when there is a shift in political ideology and power.³⁷ Good examples of this are

³⁶ Emily Allen, ‘Is it a bird or is it a plane?’, *Mailonline*, 17 June 2011, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2004814/Is-bird-Is-plane-No-Superman-friends-painted-Soviet-statue-Banksy-Bulgaria.html>, (accessed 18 October 2011).

³⁷ Dwyer and Alderman, p. 165.

post-socialist cityscapes in Eastern and Central Europe after the late 1980s, including Berlin, Budapest, and Bucharest.

The third metaphorical lens is *performance*. *Performance* is where the symbols located in the landscape act as a “stage, literally and figuratively, for a wide range of the social productions”.³⁸ Locations become more than a place of symbolic representation; they are physically used as a place of worship, protest, organised festivals, or rituals. For example, a war memorial like the one located in Gräfenberg, Germany, may denote the state’s attempt to initiate a system of remembrance or a central location for bereavement.³⁹ While there is an ‘official’ position on how the memorial is perceived as a site for gathering and remembering past events, other groups, in contrast, attach a multiplicity of meanings in order to create a different message. In the case of Gräfenberg, National Democratic Party (NDP) members, who often promote far-right, patriotic messages similar to those of the former Nazi party, staged yearly gatherings at the site of the memorial to demonstrate their devotion to German nationalism. The monument, which was on public land, was transferred by the local city council to private ownership in order to bar NDP gatherings at its location.⁴⁰ Thus members of the council forced NDP members away from the memorial site to congregate in other parts of the township where they have yearly political rallies. In essence, the *performance* lens considers how people physically interact with public spaces to “highlight the historical identity of places” as well as “align their own causes to a site”.⁴¹

The concepts of cultural geography as well as the examples cited are useful in underpinning the theoretical framework of this study. Theories within the current field of cultural geography are centred on those groups who make and re-make the commemorative markers in the landscape. These battles are part of a larger context in the construction of the world around us. Groups compete over the formation of spaces as a process of making territorial claims to express their version of the past. As Jeffrey Olick

³⁸ Ibid., p. 171.

³⁹ ‘Far Right is well established in Bavaria’, *Der Spiegel*, 15 December 2008.

⁴⁰ ‘German Town battles Neo-Nazis’, *RT news*, <http://www.mefedia.com/news/14625050> (accessed 18 October 2011).

⁴¹ Dwyer and Alderman, p. 175.

argues, memory is a powerful symbol of the many political and social transitions in society through a span of time.⁴² The changing of political parties, government systems, and portrayals of groups or individuals make the reformation of a nation's past visible in the physical landscape. Kathrine Hodgins and Susannah Radstone contend that "the very fact that there are divergences, inconsistencies, different versions at different times, is in itself revealing both about the culture in which these memories have been built and emerge, and about the workings of memory itself."⁴³

There are two key concepts which come into play when considering how memory has influenced commemorative names studies: 'collective memory' and 'sites of memory'. The first refers to Maurice Halbwachs's sociological theorisation of 'collective memory'. 'Collective memory' refers to the concept that groups use to communicate about the past in the present. A summary of Halbwachs's background and theory is described in the following paragraphs. This is followed by Pierre Nora's more contemporary theory of memory, which explains how 'sites of memory' are an embellished product of modernisation that exist in everyday objects and symbols in society.⁴⁴

Maurice Halbwachs's publication, *La mémoire collective*, arguably made him the first theorist to conceptualise memory as a social function. His original work, published in 1950, was translated into two different English versions in 1980 and 1992. Since then his work has received an immense amount of interest in the majority of studies dealing with memory within the humanities and social sciences.⁴⁵ In recent debate however, scholars have challenged his originality. In fact it is argued that two other researchers, Aby Warburg and Emilie Durkheim, had advanced the idea of memories as social constructions before Halbwachs. Warburg, an art historian, considered memory as a

⁴² Jeffrey Olick, *Politics of Regret: On Collective Memory and Historical Responsibility* (New York, 2007), p. 17.

⁴³ Kathrine Hodgkin and Susannah Radstone, 'Transforming Memory', in Kathrine Hodgkins and Susannah Radstone (eds.), *Contested Pasts* (New York, 2005), p. 5.

⁴⁴ Pierre Nora, 'Between memory and history', in Lawrence Kritzman (ed.) and Arthur Goldhammer (trans.), *Realms of Memory Vol.1* (New York, 1992), p. 7.

⁴⁵ Maurice Halbwachs, *The collective memory*, in Francis Ditter and Vida Yazdi Ditter (trans.), (New York, 1980).; Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, in Lewis Coser (trans. and ed.), (Chicago, 1992).

function of civilisation that was preserved in the symbols of society.⁴⁶ However, Warburg neither developed nor published his theories. Emile Durkheim, on the other hand, influenced a generation of intellectuals, including Halbwachs, on the ways to analyse the consciousness of the collective. He conceptualised that commemorative rituals played a role in the passing on of memory during ceremonial events in society which he called collective effervescence.⁴⁷ In spite of his advancement of memory as a social activity, Durkheim limited this process to particular events, specifically religious rituals. What made Halbwachs's theory unique was that instead of limiting the exchange of memory to one type of occurrence, Halbwachs argued that 'collective memory' is constantly active and is passed from one generation to the next.

The main premise anchored in Halbwachs's theory of 'collective memory', which pertains to the current study, is that memory exists by means of social groups.⁴⁸ According to Halbwachs, "it is individuals as group members who remember", but their memories are only recalled in the perspective of their group.⁴⁹ Unlike autobiographical memories, 'collective memory' is strictly organised as a social construct. These 'social frameworks' influence and impact upon an individual's accounts of the past.⁵⁰ By belonging to a group, members use analogous vocabulary in order to communicate and recognise earlier events. Through the lens of their groups' narratives, individuals construct their perception of the world. For Halbwachs, "the memory of a society extends as far as the memory of the groups composing it."⁵¹ Thus, groups selectively negotiate what is important and irrelevant to understand and shape their needs in the present.⁵² However not every individual or group shares the same memory or identity. Instead groups produce competing or incompatible accounts of the past.

⁴⁶ E.H. Gombrich and Fritz Saxel, *Aby Warburg: an intellectual biography* (London, 1970), p. 243.

⁴⁷ N.J. Allen, W.S.F. Pickering, and William Miller, *On Durkheim's Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (London, 1998), p. 9.

⁴⁸ Daniel Sherman, *The Construction of memory in interwar France* (Chicago, 1999), p. 2.

⁴⁹ Halbwachs in Coser, p. 52.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 182.

⁵¹ Maurice Halbwachs, 'The collective memory', in Olick, Jeffrey, Vinitzky-Geroussi, Vered, and Levy, Daniel (eds.), *The Collective Memory Reader* (New York, 2011), p. 142.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 25.

Another important scholar, whose theories are vital for providing the framework of this thesis, is Pierre Nora. His massive seven-volume edited collection, *Les Lieux de Mémoire* [*The Sites of Memory*], comments on how the past is remembered in the present and the way it is conceptualised in contemporary thought. Nora's study describes the self-conscious assembling of sites and events specific to modern society. For Nora and his army of historians, the nation-state today is less constructed around a narrative representation of the past than it is a formation of an invented tradition. This thesis explores the meaning of *lieux de mémoire* and how it pertains to the study of commemorative names in the cityscape.

Constructed memory or 'sites of memory' as Nora asserts, are everywhere and replace 'real environments of memory' [*milieux de mémoire*]. *Milieux de mémoire* refers to those memories that were kept alive in pre-modern societies through customs, rituals, and traditions. According to Nora, these types of societies lived with no temporal displacement to separate the past from the present.⁵³ With the rise of modernisation in society at the beginning of the nineteenth century, *milieux de mémoire* have all but vanished and have been replaced with *lieux de mémoire*. To compensate for this lack of *milieux de mémoire*, sites of memory have consciously been assembled for a particular purpose of historical representation.⁵⁴ For Nora, 'sites of memory' "arise out of a sense that there is no longer such a thing as spontaneous memory" and that everything is manufactured.⁵⁵ The result is a physical world littered with cultural artefacts that do not stay constant over time but are constantly manipulated. As Hoelscher contends, the formation of 'sites of memory' is a way to "bolster a particular political order" or position of the past.⁵⁶ Because these sites are so unstable with temporary meaning, they are easily changed to serve the purpose of the present. Nora argues that sites of memory only exist because of their capacity for metamorphosis and endless recycling of their

⁵³ Nancy Wood, *Vectors of Memory* (New York, 1999), p. 18.

⁵⁴ Silke Arnold-de Simine, *Memory Traces: 1989 and the Question of German Cultural Identity* (New York, 2005), p. 8.

⁵⁵ Nora, *Realms of Memory*, p. 7.

⁵⁶ Steven Hoelscher and Derek Alderman, 'Memory and place: geographies of a critical relationship', *Social and Cultural Geography*, 5:3 (2004), p. 350.

meaning.⁵⁷ In sum, ‘sites of memory’ are designed and re-designed to remember and forget certain parts of the past. Thus sites of memory become specifically designed locations where “memory crystallises and secretes itself”. As Kathryne Mitchell explains, “*lieux de mémoire* are the types of conflicted spaces where geography, history, identity and memory run into and through each other and are captured in specific sites.”⁵⁸ By tracing the debates found around the construction and transformation of ‘sites of memory’, scholars are provided with a subject that categorises how national identity, history, and culture are formulated within the constructs of a nation.

In the current study ‘collective memory’ is used as a conceptual tool to trace the discussions of particular events, people and ideas throughout successive generations. It considers how ordinary citizens and political actors tell stories about a national or local history and identity. In this way it agrees with Halbwachs’s theory that individuals’ views of the past are impacted upon and shaped through their ‘social frameworks’. In addition it follows Nora’s postulation that memory is selectively chosen and manufactured in modern society, which results in a constant debate over the meanings attached to commemorations. In this way, various social and political actors negotiate ‘collective memory’ to consider how the past is constructed or deconstructed for the needs of contemporary society.

When I use the term ‘collective memory’ I do not intend to group all Germans under one homogeneous umbrella of national identity or ideology. Such an approach would minimise the diversity of opinions in German society and assume that every German conducts their life in the construct of one overarching national stereotype. However there are certain themes that run throughout periods of time, which are constantly deliberated in contemporary ‘official’ and public discourses, such as the Holocaust. Political actors and members of the general public debate over these themes and create numerous and distinct versions of the past. This thesis focuses on the divergent and often conflicting forms of politicised ‘collective memory’ that German political parties and social actors developed in order to recount Germany’s history, specifically the Nazi and GDR eras.

⁵⁷ Nora, *Realms of Memory*, p. 19.

⁵⁸ K. Mitchell, p. 445.

These types of representation of the past, which Nancy Wood defines succinctly as ‘vectors’, are found in commemorations, historical narratives, political debates, and other cultural forms.⁵⁹

Extending previous literature

With the understanding of the theoretical framework set in the fields of cultural geography and memory studies, this section focuses on how the current thesis is situated among and extends on previous post-socialist commemorative name studies. Two articles are discussed. First, this thesis considers Emilia Palonen’s examination of Budapest’s ‘city-text’. Second, it reviews Maoz Azaryahu’s article on street and square names in Berlin.

Emilia Palonen’s noteworthy article on post-communist Budapest street names and memorials examines the power struggle over who has authority to rewrite the ‘city-text’. Palonen’s definition of ‘city-text’ is comparable to the idea of *text*’ and *arena* put forth by Dwyer and Alderman as well as other geographers. Palonen defines ‘city-text’ as a “system of representation and an object of political identification”, such as street names and memorials.⁶⁰ By analysing Budapest’s memorial landscape, Palonen shows how various political administrations had very diverse positions when it came to renaming streets and removing statues in Budapest after the demise of the communist political system.⁶¹ She is particularly interested in the street names and memorials that the different levels of national, regional, and municipal administrations proposed to remove. In contrast to her study, this thesis focuses on both the street, square, and park names that were removed and those that remained in Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg after the post-communist era. There are limitations to such a study. For the most part, this research focuses on commemorative names in former East Berlin. Where relevant, and useful in supporting the argument, references are made to other types of commemorations such as memorials and monuments, in the Berlin cityscape. The overall purpose of the study however is to show that commemorative names in Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg were an

⁵⁹ Wood, p. 2.

⁶⁰ Palonen., p. 220.

⁶¹ Palonen., p. 221.

extension of the memory war that various German political actors and ordinary citizens have engaged in to remember and forget portions of Germany's past since 1945.

Maoz Azaryahu's noted article was one of the first to advance research in the area of commemorative name studies. His study was also the earliest to investigate the renaming of streets and squares in former East Berlin from 1990 to 1994.⁶² He argued that the replacement of former GDR names was part of the reshaping of "political power structures".⁶³ The results of his analysis show how multiple districts –Lichtenberg, Marzahn, and Mitte– underwent the 'rituals of revolution'. In essence, political parties in power changed former GDR commemorative names as part of a "symbolic message of celebration of change and a demonstration of authority."⁶⁴

Just as in Azaryahu's study, this thesis is interested in the renaming of GDR commemorative names in the landscape after 1990. The primary focus of this study is not only the names that were changed in former East Berlin districts, but also the names that remained. This thesis argues that political actors retained or altered commemorative names to reflect their positions on Germany's 'dual' past. The ability to rename elements in the former GDR landscape was dependent on the political power that the CDU, the PDS, and the SPD held at specific times between 1990 and 2010 and in specific districts. This study concentrates on the two Berlin *Bezirke* of Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg, because these districts have similar political representation, demographics, and an almost identical number of street and square dedications from the GDR era. The districts also have a number of distinguishing characteristics. Mitte has had the largest number of changes to commemorative names in East Berlin, while Prenzlauer Berg has had the least. Mitte has become the location of numerous national, local, and municipal political administrations, which were all vital to the debate on renaming GDR street and square names. It has also become the showground for a new pluralistic republic. Conversely, Prenzlauer Berg has become a location of high unemployment and a place where East Germans have

⁶² Azaryahu, 1997, pp. 479 – 493.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 479.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 482.

increasingly felt ‘*Ostalgic*’ about the ‘positive’ attributes of the GDR.⁶⁵ This thesis examines why Mitte became such a contentious location for dealing with the memory embedded in the landscape, while Prenzlauer Berg for the most part did not undergo as Azaryahu argues, ‘the rituals of revolution’. It also argues that renaming after political revolutions is more of an immediate form of conquering the past. But in the case of Berlin, the act of renaming was not only a way of whitewashing the history of a second failed political regime like Azaryahu argues, but it also reflected the political actors’ long term positions on the ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ aspects of German history as a whole. While there is some overlap between this thesis and Azarahyu’s study, my examination differs in that it extends over a longer period. I look at the changes to commemorative names from 1990 to 2010 in Mitte, and between 1990 and 2001 in Prenzlauer Berg. The reason for a longer period of investigation is to show the stark contrast in the ways each political actor dedicated or de-commemorated street, square, and parks names. With the use of case studies in both Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg, I argue that the controversy over East Berlin street and square commemorations was a debate between Left and Right; East and West; and the role these two districts had in portraying the memories of the Nazi regime and, more particularly, the former East German state.

Sources

While this thesis draws on theories from multiple fields, it is still grounded in the methods associated with writing history. I have collected and analysed a wide range of primary and secondary sources to provide empirical evidence for my argument. To start with, this thesis utilises data from newspapers and journals. A number of major daily German periodicals –*Berliner Zeitung*, *Die Tageszeitung*, *Die Zeit*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, and *Junge Freiheit*– are considered. I also use the weekly German publication, *Der Spiegel*. In addition to German newspapers and journals, I reference a number of international publications, which include the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *The Independent*, and *Time Magazine*. Finally, I have made use of radio and television broadcasts in Germany and the United States.

⁶⁵ The term ‘*Ostalgie*’ refers to the yearning of East Germans for unique traditions and ‘positive’ accomplishments created in the GDR, such as full employment and welfare benefits.

This thesis places particular emphasis on the use of newspapers and journals for two reasons. First, the controversies over commemorative names in Berlin's cityscape were highly publicised and were widely commented upon in local and national periodicals. Second, they offer commentary on the diverse positions that political actors and ordinary citizens took on issues, which are typically difficult to find in other sources. Evidence of these diverse attitudes is found in interviews, questionnaires, and letter-to-the-editor sections of newspapers. In addition, these printed publications often report on the various levels of political involvement –protests, petitions, and street parties– that ordinary citizens engage in. They also report to what degree ordinary citizens agree or disagree with the various positions taken by the different political actors. There is however, a minor drawback with using these types of sources. Newspapers frequently write from a particular partisan point of view. For example, in considering *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, it is clear that an audience who is usually aligned to a centre-right position on the political scale reads this publication. Thus, the material reported on often caters to the paper's audience. Further, the editorial process in newspapers is contentious as there are various protocols and practices which each newspaper uses to select their published material. Such practices result in the publication taking one particular viewpoint in a debate. In short, the use of these types of sources has pitfalls. One way to avoid the limitations of newspapers is by using more than one newspaper and carefully weighing the findings against multiple other periodicals and sources. When done successfully, these sources prove to be fruitful tools for historians, as they provide a wide range of public opinions and positions of both ordinary citizens as well as political actors.

As a complete reliance on newspapers and journals cannot tell the whole story, a number of other primary sources are utilised in this thesis. Government documents, maps, ceremonial events, speeches, judicial hearings, memorials and monuments, as well as domestic and international policymaking are all analysed. Above all, archival documents from national and local government agencies in Berlin were particularly helpful in uncovering the positions that political actors took on Germany's past as well as the renaming of Berlin's streets, squares, and parks. In particular, the 'Independent Commission on Street Names', Berlin House of Representative and Senate proceedings, as well as Bundestag records have been very helpful in determining how political parties

identified the commemorative names to be deleted, and the types of names to be added on the landscape.

It must also be noted that the fourth chapter of this thesis relied primarily on newspapers and secondary sources, as archival material was not always readily available. There were two limitations that impacted upon access to appropriate archival sources. First, the Prenzlauer Berg District Council has not digitalised its proceedings from 1990 to 2001. Without access to district records online, I was only able to obtain some hardcopy versions by corresponding with district archivists. Second, because of my location in New Zealand, archival research in Berlin was not possible. Instead I worked with the sources that I was able to procure, and I relied on other primary source materials such as newspapers, political party proceedings, and administrative records from the Berlin House of Representatives. Alternatively, this thesis could have turned to other districts in Berlin, but it would have run into similar issues as in the case of Prenzlauer Berg. Another option would have been to use another East German city, like Dresden or Leipzig. A comparison between two major German cities, however, would have been beyond the extent of this Master's thesis. A project of this length and scope would justify further research and could be undertaken as a PhD thesis.

Conclusion

This thesis is concerned with the interpretation of post-socialist 'sites of memory' in East Berlin from 1990 to 2010. It discusses the ways in which three main German political parties –the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), and the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS)– as well as ordinary citizens debated over street, square, and park names from the GDR era after the reunification of Germany. More broadly, this thesis contends that contests over these 'sites of memory' were part of a larger debate in which the political parties formed positions on how Germans should remember or forget the eras of the Third Reich and the German Democratic Republic. The commemorative names found in East Berlin underwent a 're-reading' after the demise of the GDR because such 'sites of memory', as Nora argues, are temporary and easily manipulated for the purposes of the present.

In the next chapters, this thesis outlines the positions taken by the CDU, the SPD and the PDS on how the past should be represented in Germany's 'collective memory'. These political parties had different understandings of how to deal with the Nazi past and the failed socialist system of the GDR. One way that these they implemented their distinctive version of politicised memory was in the alteration of commemorative names in Berlin's landscape. By outlining the positions of the political parties, this thesis utilises Dwyer and Alderman's approach of *text*, *arena*, and *performance* to analyse how inherited socialist dedications were re-interpreted (*text*), debated (*arena*), and protested (*performance*) in the two districts of Berlin, Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg.

In this study, I consider how each of the German political parties used commemorative names to represent their version of politicised memory in the landscape. Whereas the CDU reconnected to the Prussian past and the 'positive' legacies of German nationalism, the SPD mainly focused on commemorating victims and resistance fighters of National Socialism. Conversely, the PDS argued that the 'positive' memories from the GDR era had to continue in commemorative names. Due to their different perspectives on the past, there was not one single version of 'collective memory' and how the new streetscape should look. Ultimately the outcomes in the two Berlin districts came down to the control each political party had in the various levels of administration.

Chapter Two

Politicised memory since 1945: a comparison of three political parties and the political affiliations of ordinary citizens

Since the 1960s at the latest, there have been major debates in the historical profession concerning whether German history can be ‘normalised’. In the mid- and late 1980s, before German unity, there was fierce controversy concerning the proper interpretation of the Nazi period in modern German history. The controversy, labelled the *Historikerstreit* [historians’ quarrel], involved a number of senior West German historians. Ernst Nolte and the so-called ‘revisionists’ argued that, although the crimes of the Nazis were terrible, they were not uniquely German. According to Nolte, there had been many other examples of mass murders in history, such as the Armenian genocide of 1915.¹ As Nolte claimed, it was the Turks rather than the Germans that committed “the first great act of genocide in the twentieth century”.² Moreover the Holocaust, in Nolte’s view, was a direct response to the crimes of the Bolsheviks during and after the Russian Revolution. Taking an opposing stance, Nolte’s critics, such as Jürgen Habermas, Hans Mommsen, and Eberhard Jäckel, argued vehemently that the crimes of the Nazis were unique and that it was dangerous for Germany to try and deny its distinctive historical responsibility for these crimes. This historical debate was not just of interest to historians. On the contrary, the *Historikerstreit* became highly politicised with the various German political parties supporting one or other of the rival factions of historians. In addition, ordinary citizens also vigorously debated these varying viewpoints on the past.

While the *Historikerstreit* occurred in the 1980s, political parties began forming their distinctive political memory of the past at the end of World War Two, otherwise known as *Stunde Null* [Zero hour]. Over forty years later, in 1989, Germans were once again forced to deal with another distinctive chapter in German history when the fall of the Berlin Wall or *die Wende* [the turning point] occurred. Numerous heated debates on

¹ Ernst Nolte, ‘Between Historical Legend and Revisionism? The Third Reich in the Perspective of 1980’ in Knowlton, James and Treutt, Cates (trans.), *Forever in the Shadow of Hitler?* (Atlantic Highlands, 1994), p. 21.

² *Ibid.*, p. 21.

aspects of Nazi and GDR history ensued between political delegates and amongst ordinary citizens. One subject of these debates at *die Wende* was commemorative name dedications found in Berlin's cityscape. Involved in the controversy over the re-naming of Berlin streets, squares, and parks were three key political parties; the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), and the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS). Additionally, ordinary Berliners, who had wide-ranging positions on the past, were involved in this debate too. Each of these political actors and the general public had different ideas about the place of the Prussian, Nazi, and GDR periods in the collective narrative. These differences, in turn informed the stance that each group took in the debate about the replacement of commemorative names in Berlin's cityscape after 1990.

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss three points. First, the politicised memory of the three political parties in relation to their position on the Nazi and GDR pasts is outlined. The discussion starts with position of the centre-right party, the CDU, followed by the centre-left party, the SPD, and finally the PDS, the reformed socialist party of the ruling GDR party, the SED. Second, the chapter underlines how the positions of these parties determined their side on the controversy over street, square, and park names in Berlin. Third, it discusses the manner in which members of the general public practiced agency over the issue of street re-commemoration and their affiliations to political parties.

Christian Democratic Union

In 1949, the CDU became the first post-war party to be elected to office in the Federal Republic of Germany. Besides being the entrusted keepers of a new German political system, early CDU officials were forced to reckon with the aftermath of Hitler and the destructive legacy of National Socialism. Konrad Adenauer, the first chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany from 1949 to 1963, and other prominent CDU members created a politicised memory of the Nazi past that attempted to return to the status quo. Even before the creation of the Federal Republic, Adenauer gave countless speeches about how Germany went astray during the twelve destructive years of Hitler's reign. For example on 26 March 1946, as mayor of Cologne, Adenauer spoke about the "broad

layers of people, farmers, middle classes, workers, intellectuals, who did not have the right mentality... They made the [Nazi] state into an idol and raised it on an altar.”³ Adenauer argued on two premises. His first was that Germans, especially those who would make up the CDU’s future voter base, were not entirely to blame for the Nazis’ crimes. Second, he argued that if his fellow Germans “had had a different outlook” then Hitler’s rise to power would not have occurred.⁴ In this sense, Adenauer’s arguments were gestures of forgiveness. He urged Germans to move on from the past. According to Adenauer, Germany’s downfall happened because the country had de-Christianised and allowed an atheist regime, the National Socialist German Workers’ Party (NSDAP), led by Hitler, to betray the country.⁵ Adenauer’s explanation was not only an attack on Germany’s calamitous past in regards to the fascist right, but served as a warning against the convictions of a rising communist left. The solution to Germany’s post-war future, as Adenauer and other CDU members claimed, was to build a nation on Christian values that had previously been lost.

The historian Jeffrey Herf however, points out that while Adenauer recognised the unique crimes perpetrated by the Nazis on European soil, he had sidestepped the whole tradition of Christian anti-Semitism, as well as how the German church played a role in Nazi Germany.⁶ Although Adenauer publicly condemned the acts of the NSDAP, he additionally maintained that Germans did not have to be reminded of the Nazi past all the time. In other words, collective guilt should not be held over the heads of every German. Instead, he argued that “an examination of our conscience” was the path to a renewal of the German state.⁷

³ Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 214. It is important to note that Herf is frequently referenced in this section. While he provides a strong, detailed argument in his highly acclaimed book on East and West German politicised memory of the Nazi past from 1945 to 1989, this thesis is interested in his inclusion of numerous translated political speeches and German archival material. Without referencing from this publication, many political excerpts from Adenauer and other CDU politicians would otherwise be inaccessible to my research.

⁴ Ibid., p. 214.

⁵ Ibid., p. 216.

⁶ Ibid., p. 217.

⁷ Ibid., p. 213.

In terms of “dismissing the guilt of the whole German people”, how did denazification fit into this call to re-examine the nation’s psyche?⁸ Above all, the CDU’s priority was to legitimise a post-Nazi, democratic state. Adenauer believed bringing top Nazi officials and military leaders to justice was in the interest of all Germans and the nation. Thus, he and other CDU members, initially found no issues with Allied courts conducting the prosecution proceedings against the aforementioned people. But shortly after denazification efforts began, Christian Democrats as well as a large number of the general public questioned why rank and file members of the NSDAP and military personnel were being jailed and fined.⁹ Although denazification was part of the process of ‘democratising’ the Federal Republic, Adenauer had never been fully convinced of its necessity or effectiveness. As early as March 1946, he instead suggested “we finally should leave the followers in peace, those who did not oppress others, who did not enrich themselves, and who broke no laws.”¹⁰ This was a direct reference to low ranking Nazi Party affiliates and soldiers in the disbanded *Wehrmacht*. Numerous ordinary citizens also wanted a quick end to the wholesale purge of everything with a Nazi trace. The general public or the ‘passive majority’, as Gareth Pritchard argues, could not be won over by the staunch anti-fascist parties like the SPD and Communist Party of Germany (KPD). Above all else, many post-war citizens wanted the nation to undergo a process of normalisation and rehabilitation that would at once enable stability and prosperity, while preventing radical change.¹¹ In order to put a stop to the constant reminders of the acts committed under the Nazi regime, the Christian Democrats pushed to end denazification and return to a normal but devastated life. On 20 September 1949, in Adenauer’s inaugural speech as chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, he continued with the idea of doing away with denazification and returning to a state of normality.¹² With shouts of support from the centre and rightist parties including members of the CDU, Adenauer spoke of how denazification had brought “unhappiness and much harm” to

⁸ Ibid., p. 213.

⁹ Wulf Kansteiner, *In Pursuit of German Memory* (Athens, 2006) p. 192.

¹⁰ Hans Peter-Schwarz, *Konrad Adenauer: A German politician* (Providence, 1995) p. 92.

¹¹ Gareth Pritchard, ‘National Identity in a United and Divided Germany’, in Bideleux, Robert and Taylor, Richard (eds.), *European Integration and Disintegration* (London, 1996), p. 157.

¹² Roderick Stackelberg and Sally Winkle, *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook: An Anthology of Texts* (London, 2002), p. 397.

post-war Germany.¹³ He further argued that the time had come to “no longer distinguish between two classes of people in Germany: those who are politically beyond reproach, and those who are reproachable.”¹⁴

Instead of dwelling on the misdeeds of the Nazis, the CDU and Konrad Adenauer directed much of their attention towards German victims of World War Two. There was adequate reason, as Adenauer and the CDU contended, to turn to the German victims of the Nazi era. At the end of the war seventeen million Germans suffered material losses, eight million were forced to move to the Federal Republic from Eastern territories, and there were millions of German POWs many of whom were presumed to have died or had not returned home.¹⁵ Karl Jaspers, a German philosopher, commented on how nearly every German family was affected. He emphasised that “virtually everyone has lost close relatives and friends.” He wrote with great concern, because so many Germans were missing, “most people would have a sense only for their own kind”.¹⁶ Rather than Germans assuming the role as the perpetrator of Nazi crimes directly after the war, contemporaries began highlighting their own victim status.¹⁷

This victim discourse became strongly exemplified throughout the late 1940s and early 50s. Numerous commemorations, literature, and films concentrated on ordinary German soldiers as the principal victims of National Socialism.¹⁸ The drafting of official policy was also constructed to help German victims of war. In an attempt to support widows, the Federal Republic, with little controversy, passed legislation called the ‘Law to Aid Victims of War’ in 1950.¹⁹ The bill paid pensions to all widows regardless of the crimes their husbands or they themselves might have committed under the Nazi regime. Everyone who could be categorised under this provision could make a claim. The ‘Law

¹³ Ibid., p. 397.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 397.

¹⁵ Robert Moeller, ‘The Politics of the Past in the 1950s: Rhetorics of Victimisation in East and West Germany’, in Bill Niven (ed.), *German as Victims: Remembering the Past in Contemporary Germany* (New York, 2006) pp. 27 – 29.

¹⁶ Karl Jaspers and E.B. Ashton, *The Question of German Guilt* (New York, 1961) p. 15.

¹⁷ Bill Niven, ‘Introduction’, in Bill Niven (ed.), *German as Victims: Remembering the Past in Contemporary Germany* (New York, 2006) p. 16.

¹⁸ Stefan Berger, *Germany* (New York, 2004), p. 173.

¹⁹ Elizabeth D. Heineman, *What Difference does a Husband Make? : Women and Marital Status in Nazi and Postwar Germany* (Berkeley, 1999), p. 162.

to Aid Victims of War' came nearly two years before the reparations agreement between Israel and West Germany, which was intended to compensate Jewish victims of the Holocaust. In his inaugural speech, Adenauer remarked that "the government of the Federal Republic, in the belief that many have subjectively atoned for a guilt that was not heavy, is determined where it appears acceptable to do so to put the past behind us."²⁰ Three years separated this speech and the beginning of *Wiedergutmachen* [putting things right] or the recognition of German responsibility for crimes against the Jews.

The issue of *Wiedergutmachen* came to a head because of strong pressure on Adenauer from U.S. politicians, Allied authorities, and the SPD. They all urged Adenauer to make some kind of recompense to the Jewish world. Prior to the vote in 1953, Herbert Blankenhorn, Adenauer's chief foreign policy adviser, stated "for years, Adenauer did not say anything about the Jewish issue ... if he had said what we did in the past was wrong, then certainly the German people would have been against him."²¹ West German polls in December 1951 support this claim. They showed that "just 5 per cent of West Germans surveyed admitted feeling 'guilty' towards Jews. A further 29 per cent acknowledged that Germany owed some restitution to the Jewish people, and another 21 per cent found that 'Jews themselves were partly responsible for what happened to them during the Third Reich.'"²² Although he had little support from officials of the far left, centre, and right, as well as from the general public, Adenauer pushed the treaty vote. In the motions of the Luxembourg reparations, the SPD was the only party to vote unanimously for it: the KPD voted against it, the Free Democrats abstained, and both the CDU and, the Christian Social Union of Bavaria (CSU), the CDU's sister party, were divided in the Bundestag vote.²³

Throughout the next forty years, the successors of Adenauer and other early prominent CDU officials continued with a similar politicised memory of the Nazi past.²⁴

²⁰ Tony Judt, *Postwar: a History of Europe since 1945* (New York, 2005), p. 61.

²¹ Herf, p. 226.

²² Judt., pp. 271 – 272.

²³ Ibid., p. 272.

²⁴ There are a number of studies that expand on the history of the CDU and Konrad Adenauer. Three examples of biographical accounts of Konrad Adenauer's political life in the CDU are Charles Williams, *Adenauer: The father of the New Germany* (London, 2000); Peter-Schwarz, 1997; and Terence Prittie,

In addition, a vast majority agreed with the revisionist version of German history that Nolte and his colleagues were crafting in the late 1980s. Many CDU politicians spoke publicly about the need to normalise German history and identity. One such politician, Alfred Dregger, a former captain in the German *Wehrmacht* and a senior CDU parliamentary member between 1982 and 1991, called on “all Germans to step out of Hitler’s shadow, so the nation can become normal again”.²⁵ Similarly, in September 1993, Steffan Heitmann, Kohl’s presidential choice for the May 1994 elections, claimed that “the organised death of millions of Jews in gas chambers was just a one-off incident ... very similar to other singular incidents throughout history. There is no reason why Germany should worry about it until the end of time.”²⁶ Heitmann’s argument supported Nolte’s claims that other genocides have occurred in the world’s history and the events surrounding the Holocaust were not unique to just Nazi Germany. Likewise, Franz Josef Strauss, the leader of the CSU, commented on the necessity of overcoming Germany’s past. Strauss occupied the office of minister-president of Bavaria from 1978 until his death in 1988. Earlier in 1969, Strauss had delivered a speech in which he argued that “a people [Germans] that created such an economic miracle [Wirtschaftswunder] has a right not to be constantly reminded of Auschwitz.”²⁷ In another controversial speech made at Passau in 1988, Strauss argued that “Germans should once again become a people that does not walk with the stoop of a convict of world history, but with the upright stance of confident citizens who are proud to be Germans.”²⁸

A rhetorical tool used by Kohl and many other CDU officials to separate the Federal Republic from Hitler’s Germany, was the amount of time that had passed since the Nazi era. At the time of Chancellor Helmut Kohl’s inauguration in 1983, nearly forty years had

Konrad Adenauer, 1876 – 1967 (Chicago, 1971). There are numerous publications that also expand on how the CDU positioned themselves in accordance to Germany’s past after 1945. These include: Jans-Werner Müller’s edited book, *Memory and power in post-war Europe* (Cambridge, 2002); Kansteiner, *In Pursuit of German Memory*, which has a detailed section dedicated to Adenauer, Kohl, the CDU’s memory politics; Bill Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past*; and multiple chapters in Philipp Gassert and Alan Steinweis’ edited book, *Coping with the Nazi Past* (New York, 2006).

²⁵ Stephen Castles, *Ethnicity and Globalization* (London, 2000), p. 159; Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin* (Chicago, 1997), p. 67.

²⁶ Pritchard, p. 162.

²⁷ Reinhard Alter and Peter Monteath, *Rewriting the German Past* (Atlantic Highlands, 1997), p. 45.

²⁸ Pritchard, p. 161.

past since the end of World War Two. At this point two generations separated the Holocaust from contemporary Germans. Kohl often remarked on the distance between Germans, who were from his age group and younger, and those people who were passively or actively involved in the era of the NSDAP. Because of this distance in time, young and middle-aged Germans were supposedly free of guilt. Although Kohl had been part of the Hitler Youth at the age of fifteen, he and many others in his cohort could not have participated or fully known about the genocide surrounding the Nazi regime. This separation, as Kohl argued, allowed him to be the “first Federal chancellor of the post-war generation”.²⁹ In January 1984, Kohl became the second sitting West German chancellor to visit Israel. Speaking before the Knesset about the identity of a new generation of Germans, Kohl argued that he and many other Germans had benefited from “*Gnade der späten Geburt*” [Grace of a late birth] that allowed his generation to move on from the Nazi atrocities.³⁰

Emphasising the distance between the Nazi crimes and contemporary society, Kohl and the CDU advocated the renewal of German national confidence. Kohl vowed to bolster a ‘spiritual and moral turn’ [geistig-moralische Wende] for a sense of ‘good’ German nationalism and patriotism.³¹ He exhorted young voters to not let themselves “be convinced by some jackass that patriotism has something to do with Nazism or National Socialism. Love of fatherland is a virtue that becomes every people, the Germans as well.”³² Other CDU members joined Kohl’s chorus. Wolfgang Schäuble stated, “patriotism is not old-fashioned. Our fatherland could do with more patriotism.”³³ These cries of reinventing the old German spirit, as discussed below and in the following chapters, often referred back to the Prussian past. Nevertheless the resurrection of Prussia deviated from Adenauer’s initial attempts to shape memory politics, as Adenauer was staunchly anti-Prussian. He was also overtly against nationalistic overtones. Adenauer believed that the path of nationalism had led to the rise of Nazism and a deviation from a

²⁹ Richard J. Evans, *Rethinking German History: nineteenth-century Germany and the origins of the Third Reich* (London, 1987), p. 18.

³⁰ Charles Rosenzweig and David Wymann, *The World Reacts to the Holocaust* (Baltimore, 1996), p. 432.

³¹ Konrad Jarausch, *After Hitler: recivilizing Germans, 1945 – 1995* (New York, 2006), p. 178.

³² William Tuohy, ‘The Pains Of Casting Off The Burden Of The Third Reich’, *Los Angeles Times*, 1 March 1987, p. B-01.

³³ Pritchard, p. 162.

strong Christian state. An example of Adenauer's opinion of Prussia can be seen in the early years of Germany's division, when Adenauer, who used to call Prussia the 'Asian steppe', wanted to swap Berlin for other parts of the GDR.³⁴ Instead of worrying about a revival of the Nazi ghosts or a lack of Catholic morals, the CDU's new form of nationalism would allow individuals to take pride not only in the space they identified as their fatherland, the Federal Republic of Germany, but more importantly Germany as a whole.

In the 1990s, the CDU took action and increased the number of commemorative ceremonies that reconnected to 'positive' notions of German history. On 17 August 1991, for example, with the active approval of the CDU government, the remains of Frederick the Great were moved from West Germany to Potsdam –an East German town previously inaccessible during the GDR era that had strong associations with the Prussian monarchy.³⁵ Helmut Kohl played a major role in the process that led to the removal of Frederick's remains, and he demanded to be present for the reburial of one of Prussia's greatest leaders.³⁶ This ceremony was a direct reconnection with Prussian roots, which raised concerns amongst some that Germany was reviving its nationalistic traditions. The underlying tenet of the whole event was that Germans should take pride in their history and embrace their national identity.

The CDU has also organised events and memorial dedications that reflect its 'revisionist' stance towards German history. To mark the fortieth-year anniversary of the end of the Second World War, and as a gesture of reconciliation, Chancellor Helmut Kohl invited U.S. President Ronald Reagan to visit a German military cemetery at Bitburg. This visit also harked back to Adenauer's political memory that German soldiers were victims as much as Jews and other groups targeted by Nazi policy. The proposed visit provoked a major controversy. In both Germany and the United States there were protests against the visit on the grounds that forty-eight members of the *Waffen-SS*, a military unit

³⁴ Klaus Wiegrefe, 'Adenauer wanted to swap West Berlin for parts of GDR', *Der Spiegel*, 15 August 2011.

³⁵ 'Honors for Frederick the Great Bestir Fears of Resurgent German Nationalism,' *Baltimore Sun*, 18 August 1991, p. 1.

³⁶ Niven, 2002, p. 243.

linked to Nazi war crimes, were also buried in the cemetery.³⁷ Despite a considerable number of German and US American governmental officials objecting to the visit, it went ahead on 5 May 1985. Both Kohl and Reagan gave speeches that did not differentiate between victims and persecutors. Instead they both emphasised the importance of reconciliation and of ‘drawing a line under the Nazi past’. In essence, the visit again dismissed those narratives in which Germany was the perpetrator of the Holocaust in order to stress equality between Jewish and German victims.³⁸

The CDU also began to place Nazi and socialist victims in the same discourse. For instance, in May 1993 Kohl argued in front of the German Parliament “that we must keep alive the memory and remembrance of the victims of war and tyranny in a reunified Germany.”³⁹ After this speech the renovation of the Neue Wache (New Guardhouse) memorial began. During the era of the GDR the memorial had been a place of “Memorial to the Victims of Fascism and Militarism” commemorating the victims of Nazism. During the Kohl era it was rededicated to all “Victims of War and Tyranny”, and in addition to the new epitaph, a sculpture was erected. A massive version of Käthe Kollwitz’s *Pieta* sculpture, “Mother with her dead son”, was the centrepiece of the memorial. The statue, which made no reference to the suffering of Jewish victims, resembled the Virgin Mary.⁴⁰ Accompanying the statue was also a plaque that provoked controversy. Its inscription listed the victims of tyranny in the following order: people who suffered through war; citizens who were persecuted; those soldiers killed in action in both World Wars and the innocent expelled from their homeland; the millions of Jews; other victims, such as homosexuals, Sinti and Roma, and handicapped; and, finally, the victims who had taken a stand against the most recent of Germany’s ‘totalitarian’ regimes, the socialist leadership of the GDR. The new inscription not only placed the perpetrators before the victims, but it also branded the GDR as Germany’s second ‘totalitarian’ system equal to that of the Nazis. In this site of memory, the CDU redesigned the memorial to displace German guilt and, as Siobhan Kattago argues, create

³⁷ Niven, 2002, p. 105.

³⁸ Siobhan Kattago, *Ambiguous Memory* (Westport, 2001), p. 51.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

⁴⁰ Niven, 2002, p. 199.

an imaginary community of victims.⁴¹ By remembering victims' groups from the Nazi and GDR eras and listing them all on the same plaque, the CDU continued with its campaign to equate the National Socialist dictatorship with the former East German socialist regime.

Historically the CDU had always been very hostile to the GDR. Since the establishment of the East German state, West German officials used propaganda to call it the 'bastard' state of Germany.⁴² This not only delegitimised the GDR's politics, but the existence of Germans who lived in the newly formed socialist state. In the 1950s and 1960s, the GDR had been denounced as 'totalitarian', and thus no different in substance to the Nazi regime. Until the late 1960s, the CDU government pursued the 'Hallstein Doctrine', which refused or broke off diplomatic relations with any nations that recognised the GDR other than the Soviet Union.⁴³

In contrast to the CDU's position in the 1950s and 60s towards East Germany, the CDU softened its hard-line position on the GDR when it returned to national office in the 1980s. For example, Franz Josef Strauss arranged a one billion Deutsch Mark [USD 670 million] credit to the East for the release of East German political prisoners and other humanitarian concessions. This substantial amount of money was arranged through West German banks and the Federal Republic's own reserves. In 1984 alone, East Germany allowed 45,000 people to leave the country.⁴⁴ Many ordinary citizens and politicians, however, criticised Strauss and the CDU for this credit loan because it allowed the GDR to continue for another five years. Despite the criticism, such concessions opened up more negotiations under the guise of *Ostpolitik*, a program setup under the SPD administration in the 1960s. *Ostpolitik* during its conception was begrudgingly followed and often criticised by the CDU. Nonetheless Kohl's administration had accepted the necessity of having communication with the East. Further illustrations of CDU-GDR relations occurred between 7 and 11 September 1987, when Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the SED and President of the GDR, visited West Germany and met with

⁴¹ Kattago, p. 133.

⁴² Jürgen Thomanek and William Niven, *Dividing and Uniting Germany* (London, 2001), p. 38.

⁴³ Mary Fulbrook, *The Divided Nation* (New York, 1992), p. 202.

⁴⁴ Scott Erb, *German Foreign Policy: navigating a new era* (Boulder, 2003), p. 62.

Helmut Kohl.⁴⁵ Honecker became the first East German head of state to visit the Federal Republic. The meeting between Kohl and Honecker was in response to a trip arranged for Helmut Schmidt, former Chancellor of the Federal Republic (SPD), to the GDR in 1981.⁴⁶ Under East and West German political pressure, Kohl and the CDU agreed to receive Honecker. Both leaders later stated that the meeting was necessary in order to strengthen relations between the Federal Republic and the GDR and to promote peace between the two Germanys.⁴⁷

After the collapse of the GDR in 1989, and despite the improved relationship between the Federal Republic and the GDR during the 1980s, the CDU reverted to the old rhetoric about ‘totalitarianism’. Senior CDU politicians including Kohl himself, called for harsh punishments of former GDR politicians and of GDR border guards who had killed people attempting to escape. Since 1991, 118 out of a total of 236 East Germans associated with wall killings were convicted and imprisoned.⁴⁸ In addition, ten senior East German officials were also found guilty of crimes relating to deaths of East German citizens.⁴⁹ Despite the fact that Kohl had received Honecker as a head of state only four years previously, Kohl demanded that Honecker be sent back from Moscow in order to stand trial in Germany. On 29 July 1992, Honecker was convicted and spent six months in the Moabit prison, located in former West Berlin.⁵⁰ In addition to convicting past East German officials and border guards, the CDU also indulged in its own victorious rhetoric, posing as the great champions of German unity.⁵¹

⁴⁵ Heinrich Winkler, *Germany the Long Road West 1933 - 1990* (Oxford, 2000), p. 411.

⁴⁶ ‘Joint Communique by Erich Honecker and Helmut Kohl’, *Neues Deutschland*, 8 September 1987, p. 1.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁴⁸ Andreas, Tzortzis, ‘When Germans Shot Germans’, *Deutsche Welle*, 11 November 2004, p. 1.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁵⁰ John Laughland, *A History of Political Trials* (Oxfordshire, 2008), pp. 195 – 196.

⁵¹ An example of Kohl’s championing German Unity can be seen directly after 9 November 1989. Nearly three weeks after the opening of the Berlin Wall on 28 November, Kohl introduced his 10-point program that focused on the relationship of East and West Germany and the best solutions towards German Unity. The speech came as a surprise to all of Germany’s major alliances, specifically the United States, Britain and France. Instead of choreographing a possible reunification effort under the direction of all countries involved, Kohl and his administration pushed towards a rapid unification under Kohl and the CDU’s own direction.

Social Democratic Party of Germany

The SPD's version of recent German history, as well as their attitude towards commemorative names in Berlin's cityscape, differed significantly from that of the CDU. For instance in the early post-war years, Kurt Schumacher –the SPD leader, resistance fighter and concentration camp prisoner– believed that all Germans were not collectively guilty, but were responsible for the past.⁵² Schumacher imagined that a blanket statement of guilt would tarnish the SPD and his own record of resistance. Instead Social Democrats and Schumacher prided themselves on being members of the only party that voted against the Enabling Act in 1933. Subsequently, many of the SPD members were actively involved in the resistance against the regime during the war years. Thus all Germans, in the eyes of SPD officials, could not be collectively guilty. Schumacher however, believed if there was guilt then it was overtly political.⁵³ He stated “the shared guilt of large parts of the people in the Nazis' bloody rule lay in their belief in dictatorship and violence. This guilt cannot be expunged.”⁵⁴ He stressed this notion when speaking to German youth. Schumacher stated that this “must not mean that from the beginning they must receive the absolution of forgetting. To be young in this instance does not mean complete absence of guilt but also [includes] the possibility of a better understanding and pardon.”⁵⁵ In other words, instead of forgetting, the past had to be worked through in order to understand the faults of earlier years and to bar any type of dictatorship from taking power in Germany's political system in the future.

The SPD had traditionally been more willing than the CDU to accept German responsibility for the crimes of the Nazis. In 1947, Schumacher was the first national politician in the post-war era to speak about a German restitution to Jewish survivors.

⁵² Herf, p. 244.

⁵³ According to Karl Jaspers, there are four types of guilt: First, judicial guilt, which is a judgement of a person who has committed a crime in “free determination of his will”; Second, political guilt, an action imposed on a country or people involved in war that led to destruction, deportation, or extermination. The victor appropriates this type of guilt to the accused country or people in form of “a loss or restriction of political power and political rights”; Third, moral guilt, an individual reflection on the deeds in order to receive forgiveness or renewal. This takes place within oneself and is then projected onto the world; and, Fourth, metaphysical guilt, the belief that all acts of “human self-consciousness are done before God”. A person redefines oneself to align to a specific religious doctrine for the purpose of connecting a higher being. Jaspers, 1961, pp. 29 – 30.

⁵⁴ Herf, p. 245.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 251.

While Schumacher did not believe all Germans were guilty, he effectively assigned responsibility to all post-war Germans to make up for the crimes of the NSDAP. During heated parliamentary talks on Jewish restitution, another prominent SPD member, Paul Löbe, spoke about Germany's "moral obligation to place its entire energy into reconciliation with the state of Israel and with Jews in all of the world."⁵⁶

For the majority of SPD members, a direct confrontation with the past was a prime concern. On 7 December 1970, Chancellor Willy Brandt (SPD) publicly knelt before the monument to the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising on a state visit to communist Poland. In a frank recognition of the duty of Germans to acknowledge the crimes that had been perpetrated in their name, Brandt famously argued that "no people can escape their history".⁵⁷ This stance was also viewed on 8 May 1970 when Brandt and other SPD officials organised a twenty-fifth anniversary observance of the end of World War Two. It was the first official memorial ceremony of its kind to be held in the German parliament. CDU representatives and members of the right called to cancel an event that would commemorate the country's defeat. Regardless of calls to stop the service, it went ahead and lasted an hour. In Brandt's speech, he stated that "the war started by Hitler made victims of millions of people, children, women and men, prisoners and soldiers of many nations ... their deaths, and the sufferings which resulted from the war compel us not to forget the lessons of the past".⁵⁸ While Brandt did not recognise any particular victim group per se, he suggested that the Nazi era had stained Germany's past. It was only with the defeat of Hitler that Germany was freed from inflicting more suffering on itself and others.

During the *Historikerstreit* of the 1980s, SPD politicians sided with the critics of the 'revisionists', arguing that Germany needed to remember its special and unique responsibility. Many left-wing intellectuals also explicitly condemned Nolte et al. The Noble Prize winning author, Günter Grass for example, who had accompanied Brandt to

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 283.

⁵⁷ 'Man of the Year: On the Road to a New Reality', *Time Magazine*, 4 January 1971, p. 1.

⁵⁸ Press and Information Office of the Federal Government, Statements by the President and the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany on the 25th Anniversary of the End of World War II, May 8, 1945 – May 8, 1970 (Bonn, 1970), pp. 7 – 14.

Warsaw in 1970, argued that Auschwitz and Germany's past were "central to German political culture and memory".⁵⁹

In the same way the SPD opposed those policies of the CDU government that took or supported a 'revisionist' outlook. For instance, the *Verjährungsdebatten* [statute of limitation debates] lasted for four separate West German parliamentary sessions over a twenty-year span.⁶⁰ The issue under deliberation was the extension of the legal right to prosecute crimes of the Nazi past. According to the original law of the Federal Republic, the statute of limitations was set at twenty years. In the mid-1960s, with the deadline for the prosecution of Nazi crimes drawing near, the SPD introduced a bill to the Bundestag that proposed extending the statute of limitations for Nazi crimes by a further four years.⁶¹ The CDU strongly opposed the SPD proposal and a major political controversy ensued. Adolf Arndt, the SPD's most enthusiastic advocate for the bill, argued that the extension of the date was imperative for the moral health of Germany. He stated, "people do not live in the present. They live in the succession of generations, and one cannot say: I was not yet born. This legacy doesn't concern me at all."⁶² Ernst Benda by contrast, who was a CDU parliamentary delegate and former president of the German-Israel Society, argued that "the German people are not a nation of murderers."⁶³ Rainer Barzel, leader of the joint CDU-CSU caucus, further stated that because Hitler had misused the trust and patriotism of the German people, he also carried "enormous guilt before the German people."⁶⁴ In other words, the guilt was specifically with Hitler, as the German people were misguided by his fanatic policies. By the use of this argument, Barzel created a similar defence as Adenauer when he had ridded the Federal Republic of denazification. The final debate on 3 July 1979, eliminated any specific time frame to take legal action against offenders who committed acts of genocide. The bill was carried

⁵⁹ Robert Moeller, 'Sinking Ships, the Lost Heimate and Broken Taboos', *Contemporary European History*, 12:2 (2003), p. 150.

⁶⁰ Herf, p. 337.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 337.

⁶² Ibid., p. 339.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 338.

⁶⁴ Marc von Miquel, 'Explanation, Dissociation, Apologia: The Debate over the Criminal Prosecution of Nazi Crimes in the 1960s', in Phillip Gassert and Alan Steinweis (eds.), *Coping with the Nazi past: West German debates on Nazism and generational conflict, 1955 – 1975* (New York, 2006), p. 57.

by 255 to 222.⁶⁵ The CDU voted against the bill, while the SPD and several delegates of the liberal Free Democratic Party (FDP) voted in favour of it.

When it came to the SPD's position on the GDR, the Social Democrats took a position towards the East German state that differed to that of the CDU. From the 1960s, the SPD had championed the concept of *Ostpolitik*. *Ostpolitik*, as articulated by Egon Bahr, a SPD representative, was the idea of "change through rapprochement".⁶⁶ In 1972, Brandt's government negotiated the 'Basic Treaty' with the GDR, which sought a closer relationship with the Soviet Bloc in general and the GDR in particular. The 'Basic Treaty' at its fundamental level was a de facto recognition of East Germany by West Germany. The treaty reversed the policies that West Germany and the CDU Party enacted within the context of the 'Hallstein Doctrine'. Instead of breaking ties with anyone that recognised the GDR, the SPD government made concessions which allowed both states to join the United Nations. As a result, East Germany was able to gain diplomatic relations with approximately 150 nations.⁶⁷ Most importantly, both East and West Germany established permanent representation in each other's territory.⁶⁸

In accordance with the acts of *Ostpolitik*, the SPD and many other political parties accepted that West and East Germany were, for the foreseeable future, permanent markings on the map. The German question, thus was temporarily answered during the late 1970s and early 80s. In 1984, for instance, Willy Brandt while attending the Munich Chamber Theatre exclaimed, "the German question was no longer open".⁶⁹ In 1988, the SPD Party made various attempts to negotiate more political representation in the GDR. Oskar Lafontaine, SPD Minister-President of Saarland, looked at a possible solution

⁶⁵ Robert Moonson, 'The West German Statute of Limitations on Murder', *The American Journal of Comparative Law*, 30:4 (1982), p. 625.

⁶⁶ Egon Bahr, *Change through Rapprochement*, 15 July 1963, German History Document and images, Riemer, Jeremiah (trans.), http://germanhistorydocs.ghdc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=81, (accessed on 20 November 2011).

⁶⁷ David Conradt, *The German Polity 5th ed.* (New York, 1993), p. 18.

⁶⁸ Thomaneck and Niven, 2001, p. 44.

⁶⁹ Jürgen Habermas, 'Yet Again: German Identity – A Unified Nation of Angry DM-Burghers', in James, Harold and Stone, Marla (eds.), *When the Wall Came Down* (New York, 1992), p. 87.

between a SPD-led government and the SED in order to create an “absolute recognition of the existence of the two states.”⁷⁰

The difference between the CDU and the SPD in terms of their core attitudes towards the GDR was clearly revealed by their differing responses to the downfall of East Germany. In the aftermath of the opening of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, the CDU, and in particular Kohl himself, championed the most rapid incorporation of East Germany into the Federal Republic possible. The SPD, by contrast was much more cautious on the issues of unification. In part, the SPD objected to rapid unification on economic grounds, namely, that the Federal Republic could not afford it and East Germany was not yet ready for it.⁷¹ Lafontaine became a main proponent for a ‘slow’ unification. He was concerned that higher taxes would place a burden on West Germans and that further political, economic and social issues would occur in the East.⁷² As a result conflict ensued within the SPD over Lafontaine’s notion of unification. The SPD became clearly divided.⁷³ Lafontaine, as well as his supporters in the SPD ranks, badly misjudged the atmosphere of German unity at the time of the 1990 elections. The CDU won a resounding victory over the lacklustre SPD party. Additionally, East German voters snubbed the SPD and sent the party to its lowest rating since 1957.⁷⁴

The stance of the SPD and of many left-wing intellectuals, was also motivated by a deep unease at the prospect of the emergence of a new German superpower. Three months after the collapse of the GDR, Grass contended that “a reunited Germany would be a colossus, bedevilled by complexes and blocking its own path and the path to European unity.”⁷⁵ Other intellectuals argued against German unity, which was to be administered completely on the terms of the West over the East. For instance, Jürgen Habermas, who also participated in the *Historikerstreit*, criticised the CDU and Kohl for

⁷⁰ Winkler, p. 417.

⁷¹ Mary Saratte, *1989: The Struggle to Create Post-Cold War Europe* (Princeton, 2009), p. 141.

⁷² Karl Schmitt, ‘The Social Bases of Voting Behavior in Unified Germany’, in Christopher Anderson and Carsten Zelle (eds.), *Stability and Change in German Elections: How Electorates Merge, Converge, or Collide* (Westport, 1998), p. 38.

⁷³ Conradt, 1993, p. 127.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 157.

⁷⁵ Günter Grass, ‘Don’t Reunify Germany’, in James, Harold and Stone, Marla (eds.), *When the Wall Came Down* (New York, 1992), p. 59.

using Article 23 of the Basic Law for German unity. Article 23 stipulated that any new *Länder* could adhere to the Basic Law through a majority vote. Instead, Habermas argued for the use of Article 146. This law would effectively replace both legal amendments in the Federal Republic and the GDR through a nationwide referendum and a new constitution. Essentially a new system would give East and West Germans equal footings in the political realm. Habermas insisted that the use of Article 23 over 146 would annex East Germany to the Federal Republic and the process of unification would inevitably suffer.⁷⁶ Social Democrats like Willy Brandt also believed that Article 146 would be better than Article 23 because it would “have a positive effect on the relations between East and West Germans.”⁷⁷

This more tolerant stance of the SPD impacted upon its position after 1990 with regard to the GDR on issues pertaining to East German history. By comparison, the CDU had very different ideas on East German history and German history as a whole. These differences impacted immensely on the positions they took on the issue of renaming streets and squares in Mitte and the retention of many GDR commemorative names in Prenzlauer Berg’s physical landscape.

Party of Democratic Socialism

A third key political party in the debate about street and square names and the question of national identity was the PDS. This party was formed in 1990 out of the remnants of the SED. The membership of the party was made up of around 400,000 East Germans. Many held positions as former state and party functionaries, army officers, teachers, college and university instructors, and writers who lost credentials after unification.⁷⁸ In addition nearly all of the members of the PDS were former members of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany.⁷⁹ While claiming to be a party committed to the democratic process, the PDS stood well to the left of the SPD on most policy issues.

⁷⁶ Habermas, p. 97.

⁷⁷ Winkler, p. 500.

⁷⁸ Conradt, 1993, p. 130.

⁷⁹ Ann Phillips, ‘Socialism with a New Face?’ *East European Politics and Societies*, 8:3 (1994), p. 512.

As far as its attitude to the GDR was concerned, the PDS wanted to distance itself from the political leadership of the SED, specifically from its record of human rights abuses, and from the economic failures of the old regime. Gregor Gysi, the chairman of the PDS and a Bundestag delegate, became the spokesman for the party. Gysi was one of the defence lawyers who had represented numerous human rights activists during the era of the GDR.⁸⁰ For this reason, Gysi's credentials separated him and the PDS from the former leadership of the SED. Moreover Gysi vowed that the party had moved past the old SED leadership through two stages, "de-Stalinisation and democratisation".⁸¹ On 18 March 1990, the PDS's head of Office for International Affairs, Hans Willerding, also stated that "we [the PDS] have acted upon the incontestable and total failure of bureaucratic and Stalinist 'state socialism'".⁸² While members of the PDS accepted that the unification had been politically necessary, they also insisted that there had been another side to the GDR, and that this 'positive' legacy should not be erased. A number of PDS officials argued that the welfare provision in the GDR, women's rights, and abortion rights were all unequivocal achievements that a western capitalist world could not provide. Above all the PDS pointed to the antifascist traditions celebrated in the GDR, the resistance record of many members of the East German state, and the antifascist record of the old Communist Party of Germany (KPD).

Many of the former West German parties reacted negatively and were, at times hostile towards the PDS. The CDU-CSU coalition frequently led the offensive against the reformed socialist party. As early as 1991, right-wing delegates called for an effective ban on all political members with *Stasi* [the Ministry for State Security] links. This effectively included, as Gregor Gysi reported, one-quarter of the PDS.⁸³ Top-ranking PDS officials were amongst those people in the party who were accused of collaborating with the *Stasi*. For instance, Wolfram Adolphi, a member of the Berlin House of Representatives, was one of the first to be accused for being an IM [Inoffizieller

⁸⁰ Stefan Berger, 'Anticommunism after the Fall of Communism?', *Debatte: Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe*, 3:1 (1995), p. 68.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

⁸² Hans Willerding, 'But Gysi Does Not Despair', in James, Harold and Stone, Marla (eds.), *When the Wall Came Down* (New York, 1992), p. 146.

⁸³ Geoffrey Roberts, *Party politics in the new Germany* (London, 1997), p. 106.

Mitarbeiter or informal informant] for the *Stasi*. The greatest setback for the PDS occurred when Andre Brie, deputy chairman of the party and chairman of the Berlin PDS organisation, was uncovered as being an IM in his youth. Brie's record showed that he did not contribute to any human right's violations, but he had not declared his history. The congress resolutions in 1991 demanded all active politicians to declare their dealings with the *Stasi*.⁸⁴ Since Brie had not declared his past, he effectively acted against the laws set after unification. These incidents were enough for opposition parties to discard the PDS, and label all members as ex-*Stasi*. Further confrontations happened between the CDU and PDS, as the PDS formed a stronghold of support in Berlin, the symbolic centre of reunification. For example, the Berlin mayor, Eberhard Diepgen, when speaking about the PDS's success in East Berlin elections declared, "we'll never hand the city over to the communists".⁸⁵ Klaus Landowsky, the chairman of the CDU in the House of Representatives, made even stronger anti-PDS and equally fierce anti-East Berlin comments as he called the PDS and its voters 'rats' and 'lice in the fur'.⁸⁶ On the fifth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, Kohl also attacked the PDS during his commemorative speech. He asserted "we cannot allow the spiritual and political successors to those who were responsible for the Wall to call themselves the defenders of East Germans today."⁸⁷ The CDU continuously attacked the PDS as "red-lacquered fascists".⁸⁸ It even saw them as more dangerous than the far-right Republikaner party. The attack on the reformed leftist party was an extension of the CDU's popular tactics of anti-communist rhetoric during the era of the GDR.

SPD officials were at first hesitant to collaborate with the PDS. Social Democrats argued that the PDS could not be deemed a true democratic party because it had not come to terms with its past. For example, the SPD pointed out that the PDS had demanded amnesty for all former Communist officials who were convicted after 1990 of crimes

⁸⁴ Franz Oswald, *The Party that Came Out of the Cold War: the Party of Democratic Socialism in United Germany* (Westport, 2002), p. 40.

⁸⁵ Joanna McKay, 'Keeping the red flag flying: The electoral success of the PDS in East Berlin', *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, 16:3 (2000), p. 10.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11,

⁸⁷ 'Kohl attacks PDS on Berlin Wall anniversary', *Reuters News*, 9 November 1994.

⁸⁸ Oswald, p. 68.

during the existence of the GDR.⁸⁹ This, in the opinion of many East-Berlin SPD officials, made the PDS a “post-totalitarian party which does not come to terms with its past but rather lies about it.”⁹⁰ In the beginning stages of unification, many SPD officials believed that the PDS was a political adversary and no coalition with it could ever be formed.⁹¹ It believed that any type of collaboration would further damage the SPD’s reputation. Yet, some Social Democrats broke their own party lines and criticised their party’s earlier position with the PDS. Udo Knopp, for instance, asked fellow Social Democrats why it “disassociated itself from the PDS like the devil from holy water.”⁹² However after the 1994 elections a minority of SPD officials began to relax their attacks on the reformed socialist party. Social Democrats began to change their attitude to the PDS as it looked to end the usual ties with the CDU, its typical coalition partner. As a result, experiments with a PDS minority coalition started in various eastern *Länder*, such as in Saxony-Anhalt and Mecklenburg-West Pomerania.

When it came to gaining the support of the national electorate, the PDS attracted minimal endorsement in West Germany, but substantial support in parts of East Germany. When comparing East and West German voting results after 1990, a clear picture develops that shows the PDS is, and will always be, a party of the East. As a result of its East German support in the free elections held on 2 December 1990, the PDS Party won 17 out of 662 seats in the Bundestag.⁹³ This happened however because of a one-time-only provision in the electoral law. The law read that if a party reached the 5 per cent threshold in former West or East Germany then the party is represented in the Bundestag.⁹⁴ The PDS was able to meet the requirements as it obtained 11 per cent in the East, but only 2.4 per cent nationwide.⁹⁵ In addition to the national elections success, the PDS won 23 out of 241 seats in the Berlin House of Representatives [*Abgeordnetenhaus*

⁸⁹ Conradt, 1993, p. 130.

⁹⁰ Berger, 1995, p. 17.

⁹¹ Eckhard Jesse, ‘SPD and PDS relationships’, *German Politics*, 6:3 (1997), p. 5.

⁹² Berger, 1995, p. 6.

⁹³ Berlin-Brandenburg Wahlamt, ‘Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg, Berliner Wahlen’ (2010), <http://www.wahlen-berlin.de/> (accessed on 27 January 2012).

⁹⁴ Conradt, 1993, p. 158.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

von Berlin] election.⁹⁶ Furthermore, the 1994 election outcome was a major success for the PDS. The party nearly doubled its national percentage from 2.4 per cent to 4.4 per cent. The party also obtained a notable jump among the Eastern districts with an increase of 9 per cent from the 1990 elections, 20.6 per cent in total. In spite of this increased success, the PDS again fell under the 5 per cent threshold because of its dreadful polling results in the West. But, there was another provision in the election law. It stated that if any party were to win at least three districts seats outright, the 5 per cent clause did not apply.⁹⁷ The PDS's major success in four East Berlin voting districts –Mitte-Prenzlauer Berg, Friedrichschain-Lichtenberg, Hellersdorf-Marzahn, and Hohenschönhausen-Pankow-Weissensee– provided the party with representation in the Bundestag for a second straight election since 1990. By winning these four districts outright, the PDS received thirty seats in total or 6.5 seats per district and full representation in the Bundestag.

There are coinciding explanations for the PDS's political achievements. Above all the PDS became a regional party. PDS members placed a major portion of their campaign energy, time, and money in the new *Länder* located in East Germany, especially around Berlin. They were committed to community service at the local level and created a grass-roots movement amongst their voter base.⁹⁸ Helmut Holter, a PDS leader, stated, "the work of our members in chats 'over the garden fence', around the table in the pub, while having coffee with friends... cannot be regarded highly enough."⁹⁹ This was particularly important with the pensioner population who held the highest percentage of membership in the party. Many PDS voters contributed their vote to the party because PDS officials had listened to their worries and looked to resolve Eastern issues. For example, a retired East German army officer from East Berlin said, "the PDS is the only party that cares about us".¹⁰⁰ Other voters argued, "eastern Germany needs the PDS to stand up for our

⁹⁶ Thomanek and Niven, 2001, p. 67; Berlin-Brandenburg Wahlamt, 2010.

⁹⁷ Conradt, 1993, p. 148.

⁹⁸ Gerald Kleinfield, 'The Return of the PDS', in David P. Conradt, et al. (eds.), *Germany's New Politics: parties and issues in the 1990s* (Oxford, 1995), p. 237.

⁹⁹ Daniel Hough, 'Made in Eastern Germany: The PDS and the articulation of German interests', *German Politics*, 9:2 (2000), p. 18.

¹⁰⁰ Erik Kirschbaum, 'German reform communists spark voter confidence', *Reuters News*, 16 October 1994.

interests, the other parties aren't paying attention to our needs and worries. The PDS is."¹⁰¹ With the formation of basis groups [*Basisgruppen*], which comprised of functionaries in over 12,000 neighbourhoods throughout East Germany, the PDS set up educational lectures, film evenings, help for single parents, and those who found it difficult to transition to a unified Germany.¹⁰² The PDS for many became the defender of distinctive East German interests, and a guiding light in the process of integrating into a western dominated society.

One contributing factor to the PDS's mounting support was economics. Prior to the 1994 elections, the number one issue amongst East German voters was unemployment.¹⁰³ In the first year after German unity, nearly 2.5 million East Germans were unemployed. If the eastern *Länder*, as Daniel Hough explains, had turned into Kohl's 'blossoming economic landscapes' promised in 1990, then there is a large possibility that a substantial part of the PDS's voter base would have shifted.¹⁰⁴ This was not the case, however. Instead, the PDS used the flat economic situation to their political advantage. They specifically attacked both the CDU and SPD for not having long-term fiscal solutions for the eastern *Länder*. Thus, the PDS used slogans directed towards western parties under the guise that "change begins with opposition".¹⁰⁵

With regard to modern German history, the PDS carried over the antifascist rhetoric of the old SED regime, and was hence hostile to any attempts to 'normalise' German history. It saw 'revisionism' as a specifically West German issue that resulted from the historic failure of the Federal Republic to come to terms with the Nazi past. Instead, the PDS's approach to *Heimat* [love for one's homeland] and national identity was strongly attached to a specifically East German uniqueness.¹⁰⁶ Jan Palmowski argues, "*Heimat* had become central to defining GDR nationhood." The SED used the idea of *Heimat* during the GDR era to associate socialist ideology with regional identity. It was the

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Berger, 1995, p. 10.

¹⁰³ Russell J. Dalton, *Germans Divided: the 1994 Bundestag elections and the evolution of the German party system* (Oxford, 1996), p. 111.

¹⁰⁴ Hough, p. 129.

¹⁰⁵ Dalton, p. 124.

¹⁰⁶ Peter Blickle, *Heimat a Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland* (Rochester, 2002), p. 47.

relationship and familiarity of space and place and how a person connected to buildings, landscapes, monuments, and traditions from their region.¹⁰⁷ After the GDR was disbanded, proverbial parts of the *Heimat* narrative were rapidly changing to create a new identity under the guise of German unity that was foreign to many East Germans. Much of the influence came from West German traditions, ideology, and capitalist endeavours. As a result, *Ostalgie* [a word derived from combining two words, ‘east’ and ‘nostalgia’, which means the yearning for East German symbols and traditions] was the basis of the PDS’s political appeal. It attracted disenchanted East German voters who felt that, unlike the western German parties, the PDS had understood their specifically East German aspirations, grievances, and identity.

As change was rapidly introduced to the former GDR, East German citizens felt that their identity was being erased and often being mocked by the West. West German negative attitudes towards retaining GDR history began early. While most citizens did not have any interest in reviving the SED and the GDR, many believed that their history in the GDR was being dumped into the dustbin of history. Before the 1994 elections, citizens, who supported the PDS, complained, “why did I live all these years, and who has the right to take my history away from me?”¹⁰⁸ This even led to Western Germans writing cultural texts, like *Liebe Ossis!*, which instructed East Germans to stop complaining and move on with the times of democracy.¹⁰⁹ As the honeymoon of German unity came to an end, the drift between East and West Germans further widened. Countless East Germans felt humiliated and like ‘second-class citizens’. The division of ‘inner unity’ led to the phrase ‘*Mauer im Kopf*’ [wall in the head]. In a survey conducted in 1994, a majority of East Germans perceived their part of society was more unjust (40 per cent) or fairly unjust (45 per cent) when compared to their western counterparts.¹¹⁰ Some East Berliners believed that “many from outside, from western Germany, are coming here [Berlin] eager to judge our lives without being able to imagine how East

¹⁰⁷ Jan Palmowski, *Inventing a Socialist Nation: Heimat and the politics of everyday life in the GDR, 1945 – 1990* (Cambridge, 2009), p. 4.

¹⁰⁸ All Things Considered, ‘East Berliners Seek Nostalgia in Their Daily Lives Segment Number: 04 Show Number: 1665’, *National Public Radio*, 13 November 1994.

¹⁰⁹ Oswald, p. 5.

¹¹⁰ Gerd Langguth, *In Search of Security: a socio-psychological portrait of today's Germany* (Westport, 1995), p. 66.

Germany really was, with all of its advantages and disadvantages.”¹¹¹ A counter-culture against the new Germany occurred when East Germans rediscovered themselves through, as what they argued, the ‘positive’ attributes of the GDR. Another survey showed that 74 per cent of ordinary citizens from both sides of former East and West Germany felt that “the Wall is gone, but the wall in people’s heads is growing.”¹¹² Because East Germans believed the West had dominated the economic, political and social aspects of the former GDR citizens’ lives, many in the East formed perspectives on the past that reverted back to a distinctive eastern identity. For this reason, the PDS started as a protest party of the East directly after unification, but has since then diversified and grown to be a formidable opponent against intruding western ideals. Thus, the PDS has become the East German political option over the major western German parties, the CDU and the SPD.

Political affiliation and opinions of ordinary citizens

Ordinary citizens were also engaged in the debates on Germany’s memory politics and more specifically the renaming of streets, squares, and parks in Berlin. When discussing the role of the ‘public’ in these debates it is necessary to clarify the affiliation between ordinary citizens and political parties. As discussed so far in this chapter, the three political parties –the CDU, the SPD, and the PDS– developed distinctly different attitudes towards the events in German history. The memories of the Nazi past, and, subsequently the GDR era shaped many of the ways that the CDU and the SPD debated on economic measures, political affairs, and judicial proceedings during the existence of the two German states, the Federal Republic and the GDR. After the two divided German states became one nation in 1990, the CDU and the SPD as well as the newly formed PDS party debated how Germany’s double past should be remembered or forgotten. Members of political parties were not however the only ones who involved themselves in these debates. Ordinary citizens also developed opinions about Germany’s past. Unlike the political parties, members of the public as a whole did not follow or subscribe to one official position. In this sense, ordinary citizens are considered heterogeneous in their

¹¹¹ Rick Atkinson, ‘Germany’s Ex-Communists Show Political Muscle’, *Washington Post*, 21 December 1993.

¹¹² Pritchard, p. 168.

attitudes towards the past. Additionally, members of the public may support or detach themselves from a more homogeneous position followed by a particular political party.

An argument can be made that people who are politically active are more likely to belong to a political party, but there is no automatic connection. This is displayed in a graph of level of political engagement and party affiliation (Figure 3), the X-axis of which represents party affiliation/membership ranging from completely unaffiliated to a committed member, such as a member who identifies completely with a particular party, and the Y-axis of which represents level of political activity. Overall there will be a correlation between party affiliation/membership and activity, represented by an upward sloping line. But there will be many outliers. The positions taken by people who are further to the right on the X-axis will be more influenced by official party positions compared to the people on the left of the X-axis. To illustrate this relationship between party position and affiliation with the opinions of ordinary citizens, a survey conducted in 1993 asked Germans whether they believed that in a hundred years people would say that socialism had had its good sides. Fifty-six per cent in the East agreed with the statement. But not surprisingly, only 16 per cent in the West felt the same.¹¹³ Additionally, when the same question was asked to PDS supporters, the percentage rose to 70 per cent.¹¹⁴

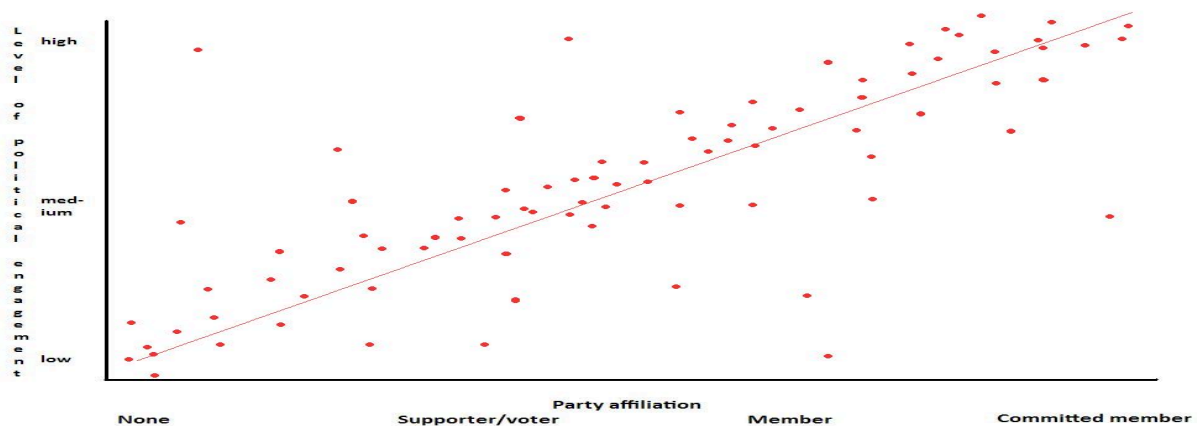


Figure 3: Levels of political engagement and party affiliation.

¹¹³ Alter and Monteath, p. 57.

¹¹⁴ Langguth, p. 66.

Yet there are distinctions between how a political party takes an official position and the positions taken by individuals. The diversity of individual opinion is represented through the political parties and representatives who are elected by ordinary citizens.¹¹⁵ Even though members of the ‘public’ vote for political parties, there are always those voters who do not feel represented by elected officials and those voters who, while they voted for the reigning party, differ from the party on a specific issue(s). Additionally, members of the public may take actions to “reward or punish public officials for their conduct”.¹¹⁶ For example, ordinary citizens will advocate for a cause because they feel that they are not being represented through the established party system or institution.¹¹⁷ When discontented with the incumbent party, ordinary citizens might form citizen groups and movements, petition, or hold demonstrations, as well as engage in other forms of protest such as marches or sit-ins. These forms of political activity have become exceedingly important to Germans since *die Wende*. This is seen in a survey conducted in 1990, in which over half of both East and West Germans believed that “democracy works best when people have the opportunity to directly represent their interests and concerns.”¹¹⁸

Conclusion

Since 1945, there have been key differences in the views of the various political parties on how the past should be viewed and dealt with. The CDU took a hard-line approach when dealing with the history of the former socialist state, the GDR. On the other hand, the CDU also looked to ‘normalise’ the Nazi past in order to revive the ‘positive’ memory of German patriotism and nationalism. Conversely, the SPD took a very different approach to Germany’s double past. Many of its members believed that Germany had a distinct responsibility to remember the unique crimes of the Nazis. Numerous Social Democrats refuted any attempts to ‘normalise’ the Nazi past. When it came to the GDR, the SPD had historically been more accepting of a divided Germany. When German unity did occur, Social Democrats and left-wing intellectuals were more

¹¹⁵ Leon Mayhew, *The New Public* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 5.

¹¹⁶ Benjamin Ginsberg, *The Captive Public: How Mass Opinion Promotes State Power* (New York, 1986), p. 184.

¹¹⁷ Conradt, 2001, p. 88.

¹¹⁸ Conradt, 2001, p. 88.

cautious of one German state. Many feared a revival of German nationalism, but also feared the economic, political, and cultural strains a quick unification would have on former West and East Germans.

In contrast to the pre-established West German political parties, the PDS attempted to legitimise itself in a democratic system. Although it argued that the ‘negative’ parts of the GDR had to be discarded, many members still believed that there were many achievements in the East German state that had to be celebrated in a unified Germany. Finally, unlike the distinct positions of the political parties, ordinary citizens did not have one attitude towards deleting or preserving GDR history in the cityscape. The divisions between Left and Right, East and West, made it very difficult for the political parties and ordinary citizens to agree on what a unified German narrative should be and what it should look like. In the following chapters, the discussion shows how these differences led to massive controversy over the issue of re-naming commemorative names in Berlin-Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg’s cityscape.

Chapter Three

After the Wall: street and square commemorations in Berlin-Mitte, 1990 – 2010

Since 1990, Berlin-Mitte has experienced two distinct eras of street and square re-commemoration. The first era occurred under the direction of the Christian Democrats from 1990 to 2001, and the second under the Social Democrats between 2001 and 2010. While in power each political party shaped the cityscape to reflect their own distinct politicised memory. In the first era of street and square renaming, CDU officials benefited from two political events. The first was the Bundestag vote that moved Germany's capital city from Bonn to Berlin. The second was the electing of the Berlin House of Representatives in 1990. Both events provided the CDU with the power to replace street and square names inherited from the GDR era. With this political power, the CDU chose to remove GDR commemorative names from the cityscape and then dedicate street and square names to the militaristic and authoritarian traditions of Prussia and imperial Germany. These actions are exemplified by the controversies surrounding the renaming of Clara-Zetkin-Straße and the debate on the Niederkirchnerstraße. These two case studies highlight the CDU's attempts to create a new narrative in Berlin-Mitte distinct from the GDR era.

As a result of the 1998 national elections and the 2001 elections in Berlin, the second era of political street naming began in Berlin-Mitte. The attitude of the new national government –an SPD-Green coalition– regarding Germany's responsibility for the past, influenced street and square dedications. Of even more importance was the ousting from the Berlin Senate and House of Representatives of the CDU party in 2001. In short, the change from the CDU to the SPD-led government provided a variation in the structure of street commemorations in the central district of Berlin. Additionally, street names were affected by the changes to Berlin-Mitte's geographical borders when the capital city was restructured from twenty-three districts to twelve. This reconfiguration placed the former East German *Bezirk* Mitte with the two former West German *Bezirke*, Tiergarten and Wedding, which had very different class make-ups. The change in demographics not only

affected the voting outcomes in Berlin-Mitte, but also ultimately decided who was responsible for assigning names to streets and squares.

The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate the differences between the CDU and the SPD-led governments in terms of how each administration commemorated street and square names in Berlin-Mitte; a district of particular importance in that it was the setting for the new, unified German government. Additionally, this chapter will discuss the capacity of each Berlin government office to rename streets and squares and the different types of commemorations that the political parties assigned during their terms in office. The intention here is to provide examples of the particular types of politicised memory that the parties developed in the cityscape and the heterogeneous responses of the ordinary citizens of Mitte to renaming or retaining elements of the GDR narrative. A person or group's response to former GDR commemorative names was, as this chapter demonstrates, influenced by many different cultural, economic, and political factors. The overall argument here however, is that while each of the political parties as well as ordinary citizens had very different ideas about how to commemorate and de-commemorate various aspects of German history, specifically the Nazi and GDR eras, it was, in the end, the reigning political officials who developed and shaped the cityscape of Berlin-Mitte.

Demographics and geography of Berlin-Mitte, 1990 – 2010

From 1990 to 1998 the *Bezirk* of Mitte corresponded with the old GDR district of the same name. During the time of the GDR, the Berlin Wall sectioned off the district to the south and the west. Since the Spree River flows through the centre of Mitte, the bulk of the district was essentially formed into an island.¹ Even though much of the *Bezirk* was isolated from the rest of Berlin, the district was home to many cultural and political buildings such as the former “Memorial to the Victims of Fascism and Militarism” monument [*Neue Wache*], the Soviet embassy, and the GDR's crowning achievement, the *Palast der Republik* [People's Palace]. The *Palast der Republik* was the emblem of the GDR and became the centre point for the Volkskammer, the GDR's powerless but

¹ RV Verlag, ‘Berlin Stadtplan’, (Berlin, 1993).

official Parliament.² Since 1990 three political offices –*Bezirksverordnetenversammlung* (BVV) [district city council], the House of Representatives of Berlin, and the Senate of Berlin– have all been located within the Berlin-Mitte district. In addition to the numerous prestigious buildings and monuments, Mitte also contained the homes and apartments of many officials of the old SED party, as well as a population of approximately 62,000 eligible voters.³

Since 2001, as a result of a revision of borough boundaries in Berlin, Mitte now includes two former West Berlin *Bezirke*, Tiergarten and Wedding. Tiergarten is also the home of many important German monuments and government offices. The *Bundestag* [the German national parliament building] is located on the edge of Tiergarten and Mitte, the *Siegessäule* [Victory Column] stands in its centre, whilst the *Kaiser Wilhelm Gedächtniskirche* [Kaiser Wilhelm memorial church] is located in the fashionable shopping area of Kurfürstendamm. The 64,000 eligible voters of Tiergarten are mainly middle class and affluent.⁴ In contrast to the old East German district of Mitte and the former West German district of Tiergarten, Wedding is a *Bezirk* that has minimal tourist attractions and also suffers from the second highest unemployment rate in the city. The district has an electorate of 105,000 eligible voters who are predominantly working class.⁵ As a result of the *Bezirke* reform, political offices were merged within the three districts. For example, the deputies in Wedding and Tiergarten's BVV were incorporated into the BVV office in the former district of Mitte. This is important to note as both of these new Mitte districts, in stark contrast to the former East German district of Mitte, have primarily voted CDU in all elections since reunification. The expansion of Mitte to include Tiergarten and Wedding has thus had a significant impact on the electoral politics of the borough.

In the first ten years of German unity, the Mitte district had been a stronghold for the PDS Party. The PDS received 30 per cent to 45 per cent of votes in the district for two

² Anne Holper and Matthias Käther, *DDR-Baudenkmale in Berlin* (Berlin, 2003), p. 28.

³ Berlin-Brandenburg Wahlamt, 'Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg - Berliner Wahlen' (2010), <http://www.wahlen-berlin.de/> (accessed on 27 January 2012).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

local levels of government, House of Representatives of Berlin and BVV in Mitte, and was always the leader in the district. The SPD on the other hand obtained the second highest number of votes in every BVV election from 1990 to 1999, while it traded back and forth with the CDU Party for second place in the House of Representatives. The CDU ranked third overall obtaining between 13 per cent and 24 per cent in the BVV elections, while it constantly received a vote between 20 per cent and 24 per cent in the House of Representatives (Figures 4 and 5).

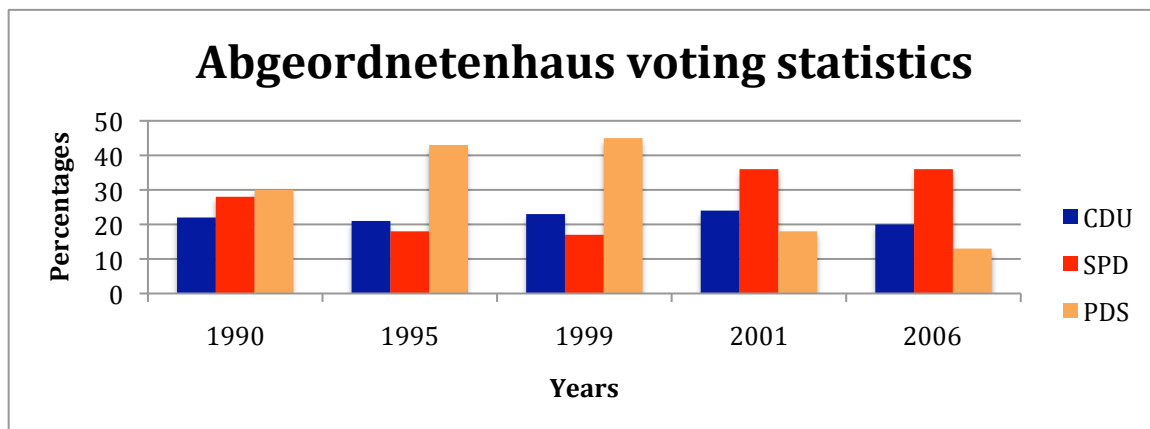


Figure 4: Berlin-Mitte voting percentage for the *Abgeordnetenhaus*. The results do not add to 100 per cent, because it is only the three major parties.⁶

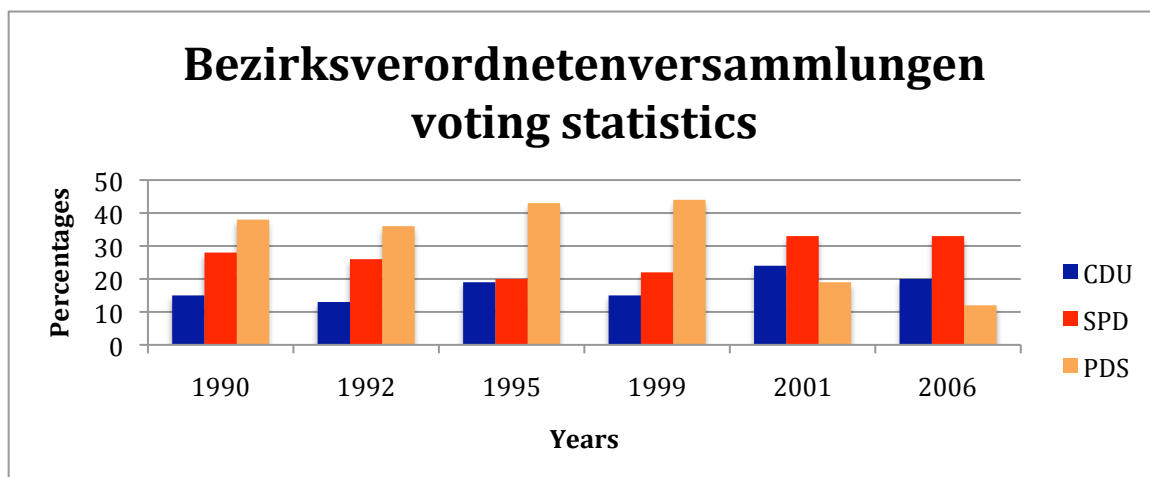


Figure 5: Berlin-Mitte voting percentage for the *Bezirksverordnetenversammlung*. The results do not add to 100 per cent, because it is only the three major parties.⁷

After the Mitte district underwent its reform, the political representation and voting percentages changed. In 2001 and 2006, votes for the PDS had dropped considerably,

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

while the SPD and CDU enjoyed a sizable increase. This allowed both parties, the CDU and the SPD, to gain a larger presence in the Mitte BVV after 2001.

Berlin political offices and the first unified elections in 1990

The election of the Berlin House of Representatives was extremely important in delegating responsibility for the renaming of streets and squares in Berlin-Mitte. Two functionary offices are determined through the House of Representatives, the mayor of Berlin and the Senate of Berlin. The mayor, after having been appointed by a majority in the House of Representatives, chooses eight delegates to the Senate of Berlin. In the *Bezirk Mitte*, the Senate holds the absolute power to establish and de-commemorate street and square names.⁸ This is unique to Mitte. The other twenty-two *Bezirke* in Berlin operate in accordance with Article 28 of the Basic Law.⁹ Article 28 states that municipalities have the right to regulate all local affairs. This grants the BVV the right to name and rename streets and squares in the local *Bezirk*. Until 20 June 1991, this was the case for Mitte. However, a provision in the Capital City Treaty [*Hauptstadt Vertrag*] that was signed by Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Berlin Mayor Eberhard Diepgen (CDU), stated that the Senate of Berlin was in charge of all areas with capital city functions.¹⁰ This allowed the Senate to take full control of the dedications in the former East German *Bezirk Mitte*.

On 2 December 1990, for the first time since 1946, the people of Berlin went to the polls to elect a House of Representatives for the whole city. In total, two million Berliners in twenty-three *Bezirke* participated in the elections, a turn out of nearly 81 per cent.¹¹ Three key parties, the CDU, the SPD, and the PDS, were represented in East Berlin, while the CDU and the SPD were the major parties in West Berlin. The CDU won an overwhelming majority in West Berlin with 49.8 per cent of the vote.¹² In East Berlin, by contrast, the CDU, with 25.1 per cent of the vote, came in second place after the SPD.

⁸ Der Bundesregierung und des Senats von Berlin, *Berlin Hauptstadt Vertrag*, 25 August 1992.

⁹ Inter Nationes, *Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany*, <http://www.iuscomp.org/gla/statutes/GG.htm>, (22 September 2011).

¹⁰ Der Bundesregierung und des Senats von Berlin, 25 August 1992.

¹¹ Berlin-Brandenburg Wahlamt, 2010.

¹² Ibid.

The total vote for the CDU in Berlin as a whole was 40.9 per cent.¹³ The PDS, on the other hand, secured 23.6 per cent in the East, but could only obtain 1.1 per cent in the western districts (Figure 6).¹⁴

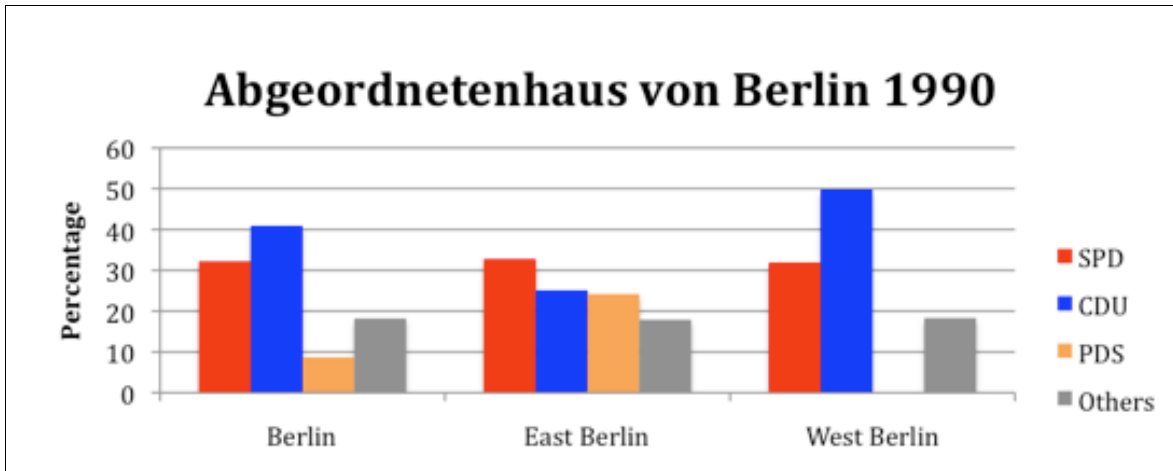


Figure 6: House of Representatives voting percentage for the 1990 election totals for Berlin, East Berlin and West Berlin.¹⁵

As a result the CDU acquired 101 seats in the House of Representatives of Berlin, while the SPD gained seventy-six and the PDS won twenty-three seats.¹⁶ A grand coalition was formed between the two largest parties, the CDU and the SPD, in order to create an absolute majority in the House of Representatives. The CDU became the senior partner in the coalition. Furthermore on 24 January 1991, Eberhard Diepgen, the leader of the Berlin CDU faction, received 164 votes from a possible 241 to become the mayor of Berlin.¹⁷ He returned to this post for the second time in a decade. Diepgen's position as mayor was extremely important as he had the power to nominate all members of the Senate to be voted upon by the House of Representatives. Diepgen with the confidence of the CDU-SPD coalition assigned fewer than half of the Senate's positions to SPD delegates while the majority were given to CDU representatives. One of the key departments in terms of the process of renaming streets and squares was that of the Transport and Business office [*Verkehr und Betriebe*]. This was allocated to a CDU

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

delegate, Herwig Haase, who held the position until 1996.¹⁸ Because of the CDU's political power and its role in altering street and square names from the GDR era, tensions grew in Berlin-Mitte. This eventually led to a clash between the CDU Party and its political opponents as well as local residents residing in the district.

Political controversy over the names of streets and squares

In the former East German *Bezirk* Mitte, forty-eight streets and squares were named in the era of the GDR. These street and square names honoured GDR politicians, old Communists, GDR border guards, artists from the GDR era, and resistance fighters. Before the first unified elections on 2 December 1990, West German political parties, especially the CDU, discussed the fate of these inherited commemorations. In these early discussions the CDU delegation wanted to remove all the street and square names inherited from the GDR.¹⁹ The CDU believed that the GDR names were a deterrent to the health of a unified Berlin. During a political retreat in Bavaria the 101 CDU members from the newly elected Berlin House of Representatives made the renaming of GDR streets and squares a priority on their party's 75-point program called "our Berlin is beautiful".²⁰ A majority of the CDU representatives, as discussed in the last chapter, believed that, because the GDR and the Third Reich had both been 'totalitarian', Communist names on signposts had to be eradicated as stringently as Nazi ones had been back in 1945. According to one CDU district council member from Lichtenburg "communist or fascists, in the end they're all the same".²¹ In spring 1990, the West Berlin CDU Party created a comprehensive list of forty-two streets and squares to be renamed throughout Berlin.²² These dedications needed to be removed in order to eliminate the legacy of the GDR.

The CDU was not the only group interested in the inherited GDR names, however. The Municipal and District Study Group of Street Renaming [*Arbeitsgemeinschaft*

¹⁸ Berlin Senat, 'Senat Diepgen II, 1991 – 2001', <http://www.berlin.de/rbmskzl/rbm/senatsgalerie/diepgen2.html> (accessed February 15, 2012).

¹⁹ Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin* (Chicago, 1997), p. 209.

²⁰ 'CDU will unser Berlin schönen', *Die Tageszeitung*, 3 December 1991, p. 21.

²¹ Ladd, p. 209.

²² Maoz Azaryahu, 'German Reunification and the Politics of Street Names', *Political Geography*, 16:6 (1997), p. 484.

Strassenumbenennung von Magistrat und Bezirken] also constructed proposals on the street and square names in the former eastern *Bezirke*.²³ Citizens, clubs and associations in Berlin suggested not just changes in parts of former East Berlin, but also the former western districts. By 26 October 1990 as many as 1,400 proposals were collected, targeting 162 names in East Berlin.²⁴ Some proposals suggested the removal of prominent GDR politicians and former border guards, but also looked at retaining names from the socialist legacy, such as Rosa Luxembourg. Other submissions stated that the Berlin government should retain all parts of the eastern ideology and should be more concerned with the western districts, which in their view were plagued with militaristic and imperialistic names.²⁵ Unlike the CDU's comprehensive list, citizens recommended a wide range of former GDR street and square names as well as names commemorated to other eras of German history that should be removed or retained. The diversity of submissions demonstrates that the public's participation in the renaming of streets and squares was indeed heterogeneous.

The first political controversy over the renaming of a street broke out in May 1991. Wilhelm-Pieck-Straße was named after one of the former leaders of the interwar Communist Party, Wilhelm Pieck. A proposal was made that the street should be restored to its pre-communist name of Torstraße [Gate Street]. At this point, the BVV in Mitte still retained power to decide on the proposed changes. The thirty-seven PDS delegates out of the sixty-eight members in the Mitte BVV voted against the proposal.²⁶ PDS members argued that, because of Pieck's role in anti-Nazi resistance, his name deserved to be commemorated.²⁷ Furthermore, the PDS rejected any reconnection to the Prussian past because it represented a militaristic and imperialist epoch in Germany history. The CDU, by contrast, categorized Pieck as a 'bad' communist resistance fighter because of his post-war role in the leadership of the SED.²⁸ The decision of the BVV not to change the name of Wilhelm-Pieck-Straße was denounced by the CDU majority in the House of

²³ 'Vollständige Säuberung', *Die Tageszeitung*, 26 October 1990, p. 24.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

²⁶ 'Überlebt Wilhelm die Strassen-Schlacht?', *Berliner Zeitung*, 18 September 1991, p. 1.

²⁷ Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, 'der PDS über Durchführung einer Bürgerbefragung in den Straßen Karl-Marx-Allee und Leninallee' (Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, 14 November 1991).

²⁸ Bill Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past* (London, 2002), p. 83.

Representatives as “tasteless” and “a slap in the face” to all Berliners.²⁹ On 4 November, Helmut Kohl spoke to the CDU/CSU faction of the Bundestag on how “it was a mystery to both the Berlin Senate and the Bundestag that these street names from the GDR era, especially Wilhelm Pieck, remained in Mitte”.³⁰ Kohl emphasised that he fully supported CDU officials because “the process needed to be sped up” in order to move past the GDR era.³¹ However, this initial skirmish in the battle over street names was won by the PDS because of the majority it held in the Berlin-Mitte BVV.

Undeterred by this setback, the CDU discussed ways to transfer the power of renaming streets and squares from the local deputies in the BVV to the Berlin House of Representatives and Senate. On 6 June 1991 Klaus Landowsky introduced legislation that would transfer all naming rights to the Senate of Berlin. With the shift in legislation the Senate would effectively be able to rename approximately fifty streets, squares and thoroughfares located in Mitte. While the SPD disagreed with the law, the party initially did not want to break its coalition agreement with the CDU. As discussion intensified, the SPD made a firm stand against the transfer of power during the laying out of terms in the House of Representatives cultural committee. Irana Rusta, the SPD’s cultural spokesperson, argued that “the districts should not be disenfranchised.”³² As the SPD contended, these matters should be strictly up to the deputies in the local BVV. Helios Mendiburu, the district mayor of Friedrichshain (SPD), stated that “the renaming of streets was not purely administrative but must be actively questioned by the citizens of Berlin.”³³ The PDS officials positioned themselves on the side of the SPD in claiming that the district governments, as the current law stated, should be responsible for naming and renaming. Other minority parties, like the FDP and Alliance 90/Greens, also took sides on the debate. The Alliance 90/Greens, for instance, agreed with the SPD and PDS that the BVVs were entitled to determine their own criteria for renaming, while the FDP sided with the CDU. FDP officials contended that the decision was too important to leave

²⁹ *Berliner Zeitung*, 18 September 1991, p. 1.

³⁰ ‘Kohl für Umbenennungen’, *Berliner Zeitung*, 5 November 1991, p. 12.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

³² ‘Umbenennung vertrag’, *Die Tageszeitung*, 28 June 1991, p. 28.

³³ ‘Friedrichshainer Strassen werden vorerst nicht die Namen wechseln’, *Die Tageszeitung*, 14 June 1991, p. 46.

to local officials.³⁴ As talks broke down in the cultural committee and the House of Representatives, Jochen Felicke, a CDU Bundestag representative, pasted a cardboard sign of Wilhelmstraße over the Otto-Grotewohl-Straße signpost, claiming that the GDR past was finished and demanded that the renaming of streets be handed over to the Berlin Senate.³⁵

As the CDU was unable to persuade its coalition partner to transfer all power of renaming streets and squares to the Senate, the CDU continued its campaign to remove all GDR street names from East Berlin. In late June 1991, the Senate of Berlin compiled another hit-list of 190 street names drawn from each of East Berlin's *Bezirke*.³⁶ In addition CDU officials assembled a revamped list of thirty-seven street names in Mitte. In the same month, the ability of the CDU to influence the process of renaming streets and squares in Mitte was sped up by the decision of the German Bundestag to transfer the capital from Bonn to Berlin. The provisions in the Capital City Treaty reassigned all control over the naming of streets in Mitte from the PDS-led BVV, in which the PDS had an absolute majority, to the Senate of Berlin, which was dominated by the CDU.

Subsequently the first round of name changes in Mitte began on 1 December 1991. Nine streets were involved, all of which bore the names of SED leaders or GDR border guards who had not only shot at people trying to get over the Wall, but who had themselves been killed protecting the Wall.³⁷ In line with the campaign of the CDU to reconnect with the Prussian past, all of the streets had their original Prussian names restored to them. Three of these names referred directly to Prussian aristocracy: Luisenstraße referred to Louise Wilhelmine Amalie, a Prussian princess from the nineteenth century; Markgrafenstraße honoured Philipp Wilhelm, a Prussian Field-marshal from the seventeenth century; and Gendarmenmarkt was dedicated to the nobles who had protected the Kings of Prussia. Five of the restored names were not overtly political, but some still had imperial connections. Jägerstraße, for example, was named

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ *Berliner Zeitung*, 18 September 1991, p. 1.

³⁶ Azaryahu, 1997, p. 484.

³⁷ Patrick Major, *Behind the Berlin Wall* (Oxford, 2010), p. 148.

after the seventeenth-century imperial hunting grounds in the Berlin area.³⁸ The restored name Taubenstraße referred to the eighteenth century nursing home that trained deaf soldiers for the service in Prussian army.³⁹ Christian Democrats had argued that the inherited GDR names that commemorated former GDR politicians and border guards impeded the process of creating a district that represented Germany's democratic aspirations. Ironically however, the CDU renamed the streets to celebrate the epoch of Prussian militarism and imperialism, which also had no connections to democracy.

The next phase of rededications took place in 1993 and 1994 and was again opposed by the PDS. For a second time the CDU submitted the name of Wilhelm-Pieck-Straße to be altered to Torstraße. The CDU also proposed changing the name of Otto-Grotewohl-Straße because Otto Grotewohl, although originally a Social Democrat, had ended his political career as a senior member of the SED and President of the GDR. Some prominent businesspeople in Mitte also agreed with the CDU's proposal to delete Grotewohl's street name dedication. For example, many company executives from *Treuhand*, a subordinate corporation of the Federal Republic's Ministry of Finance that restructured over 8,500 state-owned East German enterprises, protested the continued use of political street names from the GDR era. Instead of retaining Otto-Grotewohl-Straße on their letterhead, some employees changed their address to reflect the street on the rear of the building, Leipziger Straße.⁴⁰ In keeping with the CDU's desire to reconnect with the Prussian past, it suggested that Otto-Grotewohl-Straße be returned to its original name, Wilhelmstraße, which referred to Frederick Wilhelm the First of Prussia (1688-1740).⁴¹ Frederick Wilhelm is referred to as the 'Solider King' of Prussia for his extravagant use of and devotion to military life.⁴² Once again, the focal point of the debate was the opposition of the PDS to the de-commemoration of 'antifascists' in favour of 'Prussian militarists', and the CDU advocating a breaking with the past.

³⁸ Hans-Jürgen Mende, *Lexikon Alle Berliner Straßen und Plätze* (Berlin, 1998) p. 357.

³⁹ Ibid., p.158.

⁴⁰ Hans Monath, 'Streit um Wilhelm, Otto und Willy', *Die Tageszeitung*, 19 July 1993, p. 4.

⁴¹ Nevin, 2002, p. 85.

⁴² Stanley Sandler, *Ground Warfare: an international encyclopaedia, Volume 1* (Santa Barbara, 2002), pp. 296 – 297.

Ordinary citizens also expressed opinions on the various renaming proposals. When it came to the recent plans to de-commemorate the Grotewohl and Pieck streets, residents complained their positions were not being considered. A number of residents believed that “they misjudged the concept of democracy.”⁴³ They also insisted that local surveys in Mitte showed that people were strongly against renaming Wilhelm-Pieck-Straße and Otto-Grotewohl-Straße. Out of the 211 letters sent to the BVV, 178 were against the renaming.⁴⁴ In addition, three hundred Mitte residents protested against the de-commemoration.⁴⁵ However, the views of Mitte residents concerning the renaming of the streets in which they lived were shaped, not just by politics, but also by sentiment, local feeling and economic concerns. One citizen complained with the changing of their street name that “I found myself no longer in my own neighbourhood.”⁴⁶ Some residents argued that the street changes were completely unnecessary.⁴⁷ They claimed that the changes were a waste of time and did not serve any productive purpose. Residents, who lived on the renamed streets, would have to obtain new driving licenses and library cards as well as inform relatives and businesses of the name changes in order to get mail.⁴⁸ Many of the residents of the old East German district of Mitte expressed the view that “the GDR is a period, which is part of our history”.⁴⁹ By contrast, some western citizens living in Mitte exclaimed, “there is a lot of talk about the danger of easterners losing their identity. Identity with what?”⁵⁰ Another factor concerning residents on both sides of the former wall was the sheer cost of changing the street names. A replacement street sign was priced at 160DM [110USD] per signpost. The taxpayers of the district in these instances footed the bill to replace the street signs at a total cost of 57,400DM [38,400USD].⁵¹ One citizen, irate over what he considered to be a waste of money,

⁴³ ‘Demokratisches Vorgehen?’, *Berliner Zeitung*, 11 November 1995.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁴⁵ ‘Wilhelm Pieck Soll Bleiben’, *Berliner Zeitung*, 7 May 1994, p. 1.

⁴⁶ ‘Alte Strasse, Neue Schilder’, *Berliner Zeitung*, 26 July 1994, p. 1.

⁴⁷ *Berliner Zeitung*, 7 May 1994, p. 1.

⁴⁸ Julia Naumann, ‘Eilantrag gegen Wilhelm’, *Die Tageszeitung*, 30 September 1993, p. 24.

⁴⁹ *Berliner Zeitung*, 26 July 1994, p. 1.

⁵⁰ Stephen Kinzer, ‘O, Niederkirchnerstrasse, Be Some Other Name’, *New York Times*, 1 December 1994.

⁵¹ Kinzer, 1 December 1994; XE Currency Converter, ‘Universal Currency Converter’, <http://www.xe.com/>, (accessed on 12 December 2011).

exclaimed “here you see how our money is thrown out the window.”⁵² Business owners also lodged complaints with the Berlin administrative court and the Senate opposing the removal of the old GDR politicians from street signs on economic grounds as well.⁵³ For instance, Frank Hübner, a local resident who ran an optometrist practice in Mitte, started a community campaign against the renaming of the Wilhelm-Pieck-Straße. Although Hübner did not want to continue the idolisation of the former GDR head of state, he complained that he, like other business owners, would not be compensated for the considerable amount of money that they had spent on forms, stamps, and stickers with the old addresses.⁵⁴ In his case, the amount was 25,000DM [16,600USD].⁵⁵ However, the protests of the PDS, Mitte residents and business owners against the name changes were disregarded, and the Senate insisted on the return of the two streets to their original Prussian names.⁵⁶

In light of political and resident opposition to past name changes, the Senate’s grand coalition partners, the CDU and the SPD, jointly requested the creation of a commission. Both parties believed this had to be done in order to stop the unproductive power struggle between the different political representatives.⁵⁷ On 17 September 1993, the Independent Commission was formed, its primary function being to draw up guidelines for the renaming of streets and squares in Berlin-Mitte. Herwig Haase was charged by the Senate to nominate the panellists. Of the seven members, six were West Germans and only one was originally from East Germany. A number of the members were West German historians. One such prominent West German historian was Heinrich August Winkler, a professor at Humboldt University and chair of the Commission. The Commission’s stated objective was to produce a system of names that would represent a pluralistic, tolerant,

⁵² *Berliner Zeitung*, 26 July 1994, p. 1.

⁵³ *Berliner Zeitung*, 7 May 1994, p. 1.

⁵⁴ Kordula Doerfler, ‘Wilhelm Pieck und andere “Dinokraten”’, *Die Tageszeitung*, 23 July 1994, p. 32.

⁵⁵ Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, ‘Lesung des Antrags der Fraktion der PDS über Änderung des Berliner Straßengesetzes’ (Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, 15 September 1994); XE, (accessed on 12 December 2011).

⁵⁶ ‘Die Wilhelmstraße wächst zusammen’, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 10 June 1993.

⁵⁷ Unabhängige Kommission zur Umbenennung von Straßen, ‘Abschlussbericht’ (Senat von Berlin, 1994), p. 1.

democratic place to live.⁵⁸ On 17 March 1994, the Independent Commission made the following recommendations: first, all street names that commemorated members of the SED should be changed; second, members of the German Communist Party (KPD) and the International Communist Party (ICP) should be de-commemorated on the grounds that, through their opposition to the democratic order during the Weimar Republic, they had assisted, albeit unintentionally, the Nazis' rise to power; third, people who fought for human and citizens' rights should be commemorated; fourth, new street and square names should recognise those people who fought against the dictatorships of National Socialism and the regime of the GDR.⁵⁹

The recommendations of the Independent Commission produced two controversies in the form of street renaming proposals. As shown by the case study of Clara-Zetkin-Straße in the following section, the Independent Commission aided the CDU party's desire to change those street names that commemorated socialists and Communists who died before the creation of the SED or the GDR. It was this controversy that pitted the CDU against not only the PDS, but also its partner in the grand coalition, the SPD, along with many citizens of Mitte. Shortly after the controversy surrounding the renaming of the Clara-Zetkin-Straße, a second dispute occurred when members of the CDU and FDP followed the Independent Commission's report and proposed the renaming of the Niederkirchnerstraße to *Am Preußischer Landtag* [On Prussian Parliament].

Clara-Zetkin-Straße case study

The Clara-Zetkin-Straße was an exceptional case in the controversy over the renaming of streets. The street was dedicated to Clara Zetkin, who had been a member of the SPD until 1919 when she switched to the KPD. Zetkin was also known for being an avid feminist, and an anti-war organiser during the Great War.⁶⁰ She exemplified the socialist traditions aspired to by women in Germany and abroad.⁶¹ Despite the fact that Zetkin had died in 1933, long before the foundation of the GDR, the CDU wished to erase her name

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 30.

⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 4 – 6.

⁶⁰ Tania Ünlüdag-Puschnerat, 'A German Communist: Clara Zetkin 1857-1933', in Morgan, Kevin et.al. (eds), *Agents in the Revolution* (Bern, 2005), p. 94.

⁶¹ Karen Hunt, *Equivocal Feminists* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 69.

from Mitte's cityscape for three main reasons. First, Zetkin had been celebrated in the former GDR as a heroine and a cultural icon, which, as far as the CDU was concerned, made it inappropriate to continue to commemorate her. Second, the CDU and the Independent Commission dismissed her as a Stalinist because of her ties to the Soviet Union and more importantly, to Stalin.⁶² Third, the CDU wanted to de-commemorate Zetkin because of the geographical location of the street that carried her name. Clara-Zetkin-Straße was located in the heart of Mitte and ended just across the road from the steps of the Reichstag, the future location of the German Bundestag and the centre of the new Berlin Republic.

It was proposed to change the Clara-Zetkin-Straße back to its original name, Dorotheenstraße, which had been given to it in 1822.⁶³ This street name had been part of the cityscape of Mitte until 1951 when the Communists replaced it with Clara-Zetkin-Straße.⁶⁴ Dorotheen von Holstein-Sonderberg was a princess of Prussian descent who lived in the seventeenth century. She was married to Frederick Wilhelm I, whose name had been restored to a street in Mitte the previous year. In 1674, Wilhelm I had given Dorotheen a portion of Mitte as a gift and from that time onwards, the district had been known as Dorotheenstadt.⁶⁵ What gave the district of Dorotheenstadt particular prominence was that it contained the main boulevard of central Berlin, the famous Unter den Linden.⁶⁶

Despite the fact that Princess Dorotheen had this long-standing connection with the history of Berlin Mitte, the proposed name met with considerable opposition. The PDS led the move against the CDU's intention to strip Zetkin of her street dedication. Petra Pau, a PDS city councilwoman, stated: "for years the most important qualifications for political office in West Berlin was a willingness to bark antisocialist slogans and that impulse is still visible."⁶⁷ Zetkin was part of the socialist legacy that, the CDU contended

⁶² Unabhängige Kommission zur Umbenennung von Straßen, p. 11.

⁶³ Stephen Speicher, 'Tut nichts: das Rote wird verbannt', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 11 May 1995.

⁶⁴ Winkler, Heinrich, 'Marx bleibt Marx', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 15 June 1994.

⁶⁵ Erika Schachinger, *Die Dorotheenstadt 1673 – 1708* (Cologne, 2001), p. 3.

⁶⁶ Kaupert Media, 'Kaupert Straßeführer durch Berlin 2010', <http://berlin.kauperts.de/> (accessed on 15 December 2011).

⁶⁷ Kinzer, 1 December 1994.

had to be erased. The PDS, as early as June 1994, protested against the renaming of the street by inviting citizens to join them at an organised street party on Clara-Zetkin-Straße. In the summer of 1995, the PDS joined citizens of Mitte in an organized bicycle parade to protest against the honouring of Princess Dorotheen. The demonstrations invited members of the general public, who may have not been actively involved in the controversy, to participate in public spaces. Instead of the major thoroughfare being used for pedestrian and street traffic as well as normal business operations, the PDS and citizens of Mitte repeatedly utilised this location as a rallying spot in order to claim the street as their own. By using the street as a central location of protest, the PDS and ordinary citizens challenged the CDU's competing version of the past. In addition, 4,000 signatures were collected around Mitte to keep the Clara-Zetkin-Straße.⁶⁸ During parliamentary sessions in the House of Representatives, Dieter Klein, a PDS parliamentary member, emphasised that the protests and petition against the de-commemoration of Zetkin's dedication had indicated that public support was on the side of the PDS and those parties in opposition to the renaming.⁶⁹ The West Germans, as many members of the PDS and ordinary citizens complained, were trying to erase their distinctive East German identity.

The Social Democrats, who hitherto had allied themselves with the CDU in the battle over street names, were opposed to removing the name Clara-Zetkin-Straße because of the central role played by Zetkin in the SPD prior to the First World War. Before the proposal, the SPD had little disagreement with its partner in the CDU-SPD grand coalition over street name changes. The Social Democrats were satisfied with their role as junior partner in the Berlin government. In the first years of reunification, Social Democrats seldom spoke out against the renaming of streets. However one vocal SPD member was former Berlin Social Democrat leader, Walter Momper.⁷⁰ In 1992, Momper argued that the CDU "felt the need to defeat Communism anew every day."⁷¹ The SPD objected to the renaming of the Zetkinstraße for two principal reasons. First, Zetkin was a

⁶⁸ 'Für Clara und die andern', *Berliner Zeitung*, 16 June 1994.

⁶⁹ Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, 'Straßenumbenennungen, hier Clara-Zetkin-Straße, Bersarinplatz, Artur-Becker-Straße, Hans-Beimler-Straße, Dimitroffstraße' (Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, 22 June 1995).

⁷⁰ Ladd, p. 214.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 214.

former member of the SPD, and second, the SPD tried to reconnect with East Berliners in an attempt to attract voters in the next House of Representatives election to be held in 1995. For these two reasons, many SPD representatives spoke out against the proposed renaming of the Clara-Zetkin-Straße. Helmut Fechner, the SPD parliamentary secretary for instance, argued that the street change was a “huge political attack on social democracy”.⁷² Ingrid Stahmer, a SPD Berlin senator, argued that the citizens of Mitte had not been properly consulted about the proposed change of the name.⁷³ She added that the change was the result of a secret conspiracy between the Berlin CDU and the national government. Helmut Kohl, Stahmer alleged, had initiated the proposal because he did not want to drive past a Communist street name on his way to the new Bundestag.⁷⁴ In an act of solidarity against the name change, eight female members of the Bundestag created a cross-party petition against the renaming. Wilma Glücklich (CDU), Ingrid Holzhüter, Siegrun Klemmer and Renate Rennebach (SPD), Franziska Eichstädt-Bohlig, Andrea Fischer (Alliance 90/Greens), and Christa Luft and Petra Bläss (PDS) wrote an open letter to the Berlin Senate and Herwig Haase demanding a stop to “this undemocratic approach”.⁷⁵ This group of national representatives objected to the Berlin CDU’s deletion of Clara-Zetkin-Straße for two reasons: first, Zetkin was the elder member of the last freely elected Reichstag in the city, which referenced back to the 1932 national elections; and second, she was a prominent early feminist.

Other groups, who were not politically aligned with a particular party, disapproved of the renaming of Clara-Zetkin-Straße to Dorotheenstraße. For example, fifty members of the *Lila Offensive/Project Frauenkreise* [women circle] constructed a four-meter long purple and turquoise dragon to represent their frustration about the renaming of streets that commemorated important women in German history.⁷⁶ In the case of the Zetkin-Straße protest, *Lila Offensive/Project Frauenkreise* members argued that the renaming of the Zetkin street commemoration was another act of discrimination perpetrated against the women in Berlin. It was not only Zetkin who was under attack by the CDU, the

⁷² ‘SPD will Clara Zetkin nicht Streichen’, *Berliner Zeitung*, 21 January 1994, p. 1.

⁷³ ‘Namensänderei Lassen’, *Berliner Zeitung*, 25 April 1995.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ ‘Frauen protestieren gegen Straßenumbenennung’, *Die Tageszeitung*, 17 November 1994, p. 21.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 21.

protestors contended, but the status of women in German society. Although the dedication would commemorate another woman, the groups believed, unlike Princess Dorotheen, Zetkin had played a vital role in the modern German feminist movement and she must be remembered. Additionally, members of the National and International Women's Initiatives set up free 'educational centres' around Mitte that were specifically aimed at Senator Haase and other CDU members who were in favour of renaming the Clara-Zetkin-Straße.⁷⁷ In their opinion, Haase and other politicians were not sufficiently informed regarding Zetkin's biography.

Prior to the pop-up educational centres started by the Women's Initiative, two groups at Humboldt University spoke out against the street name change. First, a university based women's group gathered 460 signatures against the CDU's motion to dismiss Zetkin from the cityscape.⁷⁸ Second, a student body of historians argued against the *Schilderstürmerei*.⁷⁹ A number of students contended that the name change proposed for Clara-Zetkin-Strasse as well as other names suggested by the Senate and Commission report were "extremely one-sided, insensitive, inappropriate and unnecessary."⁸⁰ The student body of historians in opposition to the renaming of GDR commemorations wrote an open letter to Senator Haase and Mayor Diepgen voicing their complaints about the protocol that the CDU had followed.⁸¹ While ordinary citizens, historians, and members of various initiative groups, like the *Lila Offensive/Project Frauenkreise*, all wanted to retain the Clara-Zetkin-Straße, the CDU was able to dismiss the protestors' input based on their very heterogeneous reasons for wanting to maintain the street name.

The disapproval of the PDS, the SPD, the Alliance 90/Greens, a very minute group of CDU representatives, and the protestors in Berlin Mitte against the name change were ignored. The Senate of Berlin decided to alter the name in an official hearing on 28 July

⁷⁷ 'Nachhilfe für den Verkehrssenator', *Die Tageszeitung*, 12 October 1995, p. 22.

⁷⁸ Christian Schwager, 'Stuttgart steht zu Clara Zetkin', *Berliner Zeitung*, 5 April 1995.

⁷⁹ There is no direct translation for this phrase. However, I have translated it into two possible meanings: first, a vast amount of street sign controversies; second, iconoclasts of the street sign movement.

⁸⁰ 'Gegen die Berliner Schilderstürmerei', *Die Tageszeitung*, 11 February 1994, p. 23.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 23; Heinrich August Winkler chaired the Independent Commission. He was also a senior professor at Humboldt University. In this sense, the open letter to Herwig Haase and Eberhard Diepgen displayed the students discontent to the process of renaming streets, but it was also in protest to their colleague who was very much invested in the re-writing of the name commemorations.

1995. In a controversial move, Haase withheld the announcement of the street change, which by law requires a mandatory four-week objection period. In effect, this bypassed all official judicial hearings to be filed from oppositional groups and ordinary citizens. Haase did not divulge the information until the objection date had officially expired.⁸² On 1 November 1995, the employees of Civil Engineering, who were in charge of replacing the signs, physically changed the Clara-Zetkin-Straße to Dorotheenstraße. Senator Herwig Haase, argued that he was forced to take measures into his own hands because the opposition failed to make a suitable proposal, and the Independent Commission had recommended this particular street should have its original name restored to it.⁸³ Eberhard Diepgen, the mayor of Berlin, backed Haase's decision and stated "members of the Bundestag cannot be expected to work at an undemocratic address."⁸⁴

When applying the three metaphorical lenses of *text*, *arena*, and *performance* to this case study, this thesis highlights the re-reading, debates, and protests surrounding the renaming of Clara-Zetkin-Straße. Approached as a text, the Clara-Zetkin-Straße represented different historical discourses for each of the political parties and social actors involved in the debate. The original dedication in the GDR honoured Zetkin as one of the original heroes who had warned Germans to fight against fascism. Additionally, the dedication marked the achievements of East Germans who had worked towards the creation of a socialist state. However, after the demise of the GDR, her dedication alluded to four different competing stories. First, the street represented an anti-democratic legacy that was inherited from the failed socialist state. Second, it alluded to the struggle of German women to have representation in the memorial landscape. Third, the dedication symbolised the struggles of East Germans to retain the 'positive' memory of the GDR. Fourth, it represented a continuation of Cold War politics between East and West, democracy and socialism. A major reason the dedication was re-read in so many disparate ways was its importance in post-socialist German society. One of the main considerations was that the street was located in the very centre of Mitte at the focal point

⁸² Rolf Lautenschläger, 'Straßenumbenennung heimlich durchgezockt', *Die Tageszeitung*, 18 September 1995, p. 21.

⁸³ 'Clara-Zetkin-Strasse wird Umbenannt', *Berliner Zeitung*, 22 July 1995.

⁸⁴ 'Clara Zetkin muss der Kurfürstendamm weichen', *Berliner Zeitung*, 1 November 1995.

of the new Berlin Republic. As it was at the steps of the Bundestag, politicians, ordinary citizens, tourists, businesspeople, and other dignitaries would utilise the street on a daily basis. In essence, the street dedication had a large amount of symbolic capital attached to it. As Reuben Rose-Redwood states “symbolic capital emphasises the role of place naming as a marker of prestige”.⁸⁵ In other words the name given to the street would represent the aspirations of a new German democratic society. While the Zetkinstraße represented opposing viewpoints on how to conceptualise the past, the Dorotheenstraße added another layer of complexity to how the future should look.

The *arena* approach discusses how these political parties debated over the dedication and the representation of the past. As Emilia Palonen states, “different political groupings are differentiated from one another (and differentiate themselves from one another) through evaluations of the national past.” For many members of the CDU, the replacement of Clara-Zetkin-Straße with Dorotheenstraße recognised a move forward beyond Germany’s tainted pasts that would promote ‘healthy’ German nationalism and a connection with the Prussian era. Conversely, the SPD and PDS argued that the name change was not only bypassing Zetkin’s contributions to the feminist movement and the success of her political career but Princess Dorotheen’s dedication was forgetting the events proceeding Zetkin’s death, in particular those connected to the Third Reich. Ordinary citizens affiliated themselves with the various opposing political parties as many who protested had similar stances on the renaming of the street.

While *text* and *arena* identify how and why the de-commemoration of the Clara-Zetkin-Straße became so controversial, *performance* looks at how people reacted to the renaming of the street. As Owen Dwyer and Derek Alderman argue “no memorial speaks for itself; each one is dependent upon its audience to voice its vision of the past into the future.”⁸⁶ In the case of the Clara-Zetkin-Straße, protests, petitions, and demonstrations against the renaming indicated that ordinary citizens, political parties and social groups were extremely interested in this debate and the name ultimately given to the street. The

⁸⁵ Reuben Rose-Redwood, ‘From number to name: symbolic capital, places of memory and the politics of street renaming in New York City’, *Social & Cultural Geography*, 9:4 (2008), p. 434.

⁸⁶ Owen Dwyer and Derek Alderman, ‘Memorial landscapes: analytic questions and metaphors’, *GeoJournal*, 73 (2008), p. 174.

different groups and individuals claimed the ‘site of memory’ as a place of their own by creating festivals and street parties to draw attention to their views on how the road should be named. As Karen Till argues, “individuals who are socially understood as being ‘out of place’ may self consciously assert their presence to challenge dominant discourses of ‘who belongs in the landscape’”.⁸⁷ While the Clara-Zetkin-Straße debate served as a stage to voice the frustrations and triumph of the different political parties and social actors, the final decision to change the street came down to who had legal power to implement a new interpretation of the past. In this particular debate, the CDU had overt control in the process of renaming which allowed the party to re-write the street dedication to reflect their political ideas about how to recount the past.

Niederkirchnerstraße case study

The Niederkirchnerstraße debate represents the final stages in the power struggle over street names in Mitte and was an anomaly in the CDU’s methods of renaming streets. Käthe Niederkirchner, unlike Clara Zetkin, was alive during World War Two and was an antifascist resistance fighter. However, like Zetkin, she was a communist who had joined the KPD in 1929. Niederkirchner’s legacy as a German resistance fighter began when she volunteered in the Soviet Union to take part in military action in her homeland, Germany.⁸⁸ In 1943 Niederkirchner and Wilhelm Pieck’s son-in-law, Theodor Winter, parachuted into occupied Poland behind German lines.⁸⁹ Their goal was to get to Berlin and aid in the resistance efforts. Instead they were captured and brought to separate concentration camps. Winter, who was held captive just outside of Berlin in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, was sentenced to death by firing squad. Niederkirchner suffered a similar fate. On 27 September 1944, she was tortured and executed at Ravensbrück concentration camp. Although Niederkirchner lost her life in the resistance against the Nazis, she had, according to CDU and FDP officials, a blemished record. Like the Clara-Zetkin-Straße, the CDU had similar reasons for wanting to

⁸⁷ Karen Till, ‘Political Landscapes’, in James Duncan, Nuala Johnson, and Richard Schein (eds.), *A Companion to Cultural Geography* (Malden, 2008), p. 356.

⁸⁸ Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand, ‘Käthe Niederkirchner’, <http://www.gdw-berlin.de/en/recess/biographies/biographie/view-bio/niederkirchner/> (accessed on 27 January 2012).

⁸⁹ Ibid.

decommemorate the Niederkirchnerstraße. First, they argued that Niederkirchner was a KPD member and was celebrated in the GDR as a heroine. Second, she fought under the Soviet banner and worked alongside the Stalinist regime. Third, both CDU and FDP members objected to the physical location of her street commemoration, which was a 400-metre-long street positioned in front of the *Abgeordnetenhaus* building. Finally, the Independent Commission had included her in their report as their final recommendation. The Commission believed that Niederkirchner's street dedication should be removed because she was part of a tradition that aided the Nazis' rise to power, as she was a member of the KPD. She also represented the traditions of Germany's second totalitarian system, the GDR.⁹⁰ The CDU and FDP believed that Niederkirchner could not be considered a true heroine to the German resistance movement or represent a democratic tradition because of her flawed history as a communist.

The first proposals to alter the Niederkirchnerstraße were put forward in spring 1991. The CDU's original recommendation suggested reverting to the Niederkirchnerstraße's former name, Prinz-Albrecht-Straße.⁹¹ This proposal failed for two reasons: Leftist parties argued that the Prinz-Albrecht-Straße would re-commemorate Prussian royalty, and even more importantly, they argued that the return to the Prinz-Albrecht-Straße dedication invoked memories of Nazi occupation. From 1939 until 1945 the street address Prinz-Albrecht-Straße 8 was the location of the Gestapo headquarters and prison, where the Nazi regime tortured countless victims.⁹² Social Democrats abruptly objected and stated that the CDU's suggestion was a case of "historical ignorance".⁹³ A return to the original street name would have overlooked the horrific events that took place there, and essentially downplayed the status of Nazi victims like Niederkirchner, in Berlin's narrative. The original request was rejected.

⁹⁰ Unabhängige Kommission zur Umbenennung von Straßen, pp. 25 – 27.

⁹¹ 'Der Name der Kommunistin und eine neue Adresse', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 22 January 1995, p. 5.

⁹² Kinzer, 1 December 1994.

⁹³ 'Wilhelm Pieck bleibt!', *Die Tageszeitung*, 18 May 1991, p. 33.

After two years CDU members raised their opposition to the Niederkirchner dedication for a second time.⁹⁴ This second proposal occurred as the CDU was legally able to make name changes in Mitte. As stated earlier, this occurred because of the *Hauptstadt Vertrag* and a power shift from the BVV to the *Abgeordnetenhaus* and, primarily, the Senate of Berlin. In this round, the CDU with the support of the FDP wanted to change the Niederkirchnerstraße to *am Preußischer Landtag* [on the Prussian state parliament]. The CDU's second attempt was also sparked by the possibility of the Bundestag moving from Bonn to the House of Representatives location in Berlin-Mitte. The President of the House of Representatives, Hanna-Renata Laurien (CDU), argued that she would give up the State Parliament building if it served to accelerate the move from Bonn to Berlin.⁹⁵ This also raised the issue that the address might serve as the home of the national government. Landowsky called the unwillingness in prior attempts to change the name as a "huge political scandal".⁹⁶ Niederkirchner, according to Landowsky had "never been a role-model for our free Parliament" and therefore could not serve as the address of a national government.⁹⁷ Laurien insisted that it would be inappropriate for "our parliament to be built on the basis of those who supported a Communist system."⁹⁸ Senator Haase and Mayor Diepgen, for the most part had not taken part in the proposals to rename Niederkirchnerstraße. Instead this was driven and regulated by the CDU majority and the FDP in the *Abgeordnetenhaus*. Members of the liberal and rightist parties believed that the renaming of the street was the "spiritual business of Berlin".⁹⁹

In early 1994, the CDU and FDP put forward a motion to vote on the name change. The CDU with the FDP had an available 119 votes in the House of Representatives, but the SPD, the PDS and the Greens had a combined total of 121 votes. The SPD temporarily broke its coalition with the CDU and voted with the PDS and the Greens against the renaming. As a result the motion failed to pass. After the vote, a number of

⁹⁴ 'Berliner Abgeordnetenhaus künftig in Berlin-Mitte', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 29 January 1993.

⁹⁵ 'Bundestag soll in Preußischen Landtag', *Die Tageszeitung*, 2 March 1993, p. 17.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Patricia Brodsky, 'The Power of Naming in the Postunification Attack on the German Left', *Nature, Society, and Thought*, 14:4 (2001), p. 425.

⁹⁹ *Die Tageszeitung*, 2 March 1993, p. 17.

CDU officials charged the three parties with an absence of historical knowledge.¹⁰⁰ In response, Renate Künast, chairwoman of the Berlin Green party, argued that the CDU was unable to grasp the concept that the Cold War was finished. Niederkirchner, according to Künast, should be remembered as she was a victim and resistance fighter. However, Laurien took matters into her own hands and bypassed the failed vote. Instead of renaming the street in front of the building, she named the actual building of the *Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, am Preußischer Landtag*. This gave the CDU and FDP parties a minor victory. They were able to take Niederkirchnerstraße off their letterheads and business cards and deny Niederkirchner's dedication as the authentic representation of their political office.¹⁰¹ The two parties used *am Preußischer Landtag* while the other political parties kept using the Niederkirchnerstraße address. Even more importantly, the CDU avoided another confrontation in the 'memory war' over street and square names, which the leftist parties, as well as many ordinary citizens, were more than willing to take part in.

The re-reading of the Niederkirchnerstraße is in many ways similar to the Clara-Zetkin-Straße. In reference to the *text* associated with the street name, three perspectives on the past were attached to Niederkirchner's dedication. It commemorated victims of and resistance fighters against National Socialism; referred to a 'positive' notion of East German memory; and acted as a symbol that delegitimised the new German democracy. Additionally, the location of the street had a large amount of symbolic capital as it was in the centre of Mitte and was the proposed location of the national government.

While the *text* of the inherited GDR dedication was very much like the Clara-Zetkin-Straße, the proposed names interpreted as the *arena* were very different in more complex ways. The two proposed names, Prinz-Albrecht-Straße and *am Preußischer Landtag*, looked to deny the recognition of three groups: victims, resistance fighters, and communists. In particular, the Prinz-Albrecht-Straße represented an attempt of the CDU to re-conceptualise the dedication to represent a reconnect to Prussian royalty and a disassociation with Nazi crimes. As Dwyer and Alderman state, "expressing one's

¹⁰⁰ 'Landowsky stört kommunistischer Name', *Die Tageszeitung*, 23 January 1993, p. 34.

¹⁰¹ Imre Karacs, 'Berlin's street signs take a right turn', *The Independent*, 17 December 1995.

heritage invariably means that another, different identification with the past is disinherited, excluded, or degraded.”¹⁰² The CDU’s usage of the Prinz-Albrecht-Straße looked to disassociate the memory attached to National Socialism in order to return to a more ‘positive’ connotation of imperial history. Furthermore, the Niederkirchner case study is particularly important in understanding the changing political climate surrounding street renaming in Mitte. It shows how the proposal to rename the Niederkirchnerstraße was denied only months after the controversial changing of Clara-Zetkin-Straße to Dorotheenstraße. Although the CDU’s two proposals were denied, the battle ended in a truce on how each political party recounted the past. The original GDR street name remained but the CDU and FDP were able to ignore Niederkirchner’s existence when it changed the building’s name and created a new address, *am Preußischer Landtag*.

Unlike the Clara-Zetkin-Straße, the Niederkirchnerstraße renaming proposal was subject to a minimum level of *performance* from social groups and ordinary citizens. Additionally there was very little coverage in newspapers. A conclusion can be drawn that this was an “in-house” issue among the political parties and was not as publically controversial. Niederkirchner also had two street dedications in Berlin, one in Mitte and the other in Prenzlauer Berg named Käthe-Niederkirchner-Straße. Her legacy for this reason was not in danger of entirely being erased from the cityscape unlike the other GDR streets that were renamed in Mitte.

The Niederkirchnerstraße debate demonstrates the complexities of street naming and the extent to which the CDU went to eradicate the socialist and communist political memory in Berlin-Mitte’s landscape. The changes dissipated after this final battle in Berlin-Mitte. No renaming of former GDR streets or squares occurred in the period from the end of 1995 to 2001. In the second era of street and square names, after 2001, new political administrations in the national and Berlin governments addressed street and square dedications from a different perspective that reflected their positions on Germany’s past.

¹⁰² Dwyer and Alderman, p. 172.

The 1998 German National Elections

The 1998 national election began a new era. The defeat of the CDU ended Kohl's tenure in office which was the longest of any German Chancellor since Otto von Bismarck.¹⁰³ For the CDU, the election results were the worst since 1949.¹⁰⁴ Three reasons contributed to the ousting of the CDU: first, the unemployment rate, which stood at a national rate of 9.9 per cent, had doubled in the first six years of German reunification; second, the Christian Democrats had not been able to pass major reform legislation through the Bundestag; and third, the CDU had failed to connect with East Germans and their concerns.¹⁰⁵ Helmut Kohl, for example, gave only eight speeches in East Germany during the election campaign. Even when he appeared at rallies, Kohl sometimes forgot or stumbled over the name of his own East German CDU candidate members.¹⁰⁶ The era of Kohl, who had championed the reunification process, had come to an end.

The defeat of Kohl led to Germany's first red-green coalition between the SPD and the Green party. Gerhard Schröder and the SPD emerged as the largest party with 40.9 per cent of the vote. Lacking an overall majority in the Bundestag, the Social Democrats entered into coalition with the Greens, who, with 6.7 per cent of the vote, constituted the third largest party in the Bundestag. The coalition between the two parties was unique in German political history. It was the first left-wing partnership to administer the German government in the post-World War Two era, and the first since reunification to govern from Germany's new capital, Berlin. Schröder's cabinet was made up of twelve Social Democrats, three Greens and one independent. Many of the cabinet members had been activists in the 1968 student movements, which had been inspired in part by the revulsion of young people at the crimes of their parents' generation.¹⁰⁷ Joschka Fischer, who held

¹⁰³ Richard Leiby, *The Unification of Germany 1989-1990* (Westport, 1999), p. 120.

¹⁰⁴ Clemens, Clay, 'Last Hurrah', in Conradt, David et al. (eds.), *Power Shift in Germany* (New York, 2000), p. 52.

¹⁰⁵ Francis McGinnity, *Welfare for the Unemployed in Britain and Germany* (Northampton, 2004), p. 33; David Conradt, *The German Polity 9th ed.* (Boston, 2009), p. 209.

¹⁰⁶ Clemens, p. 48.

¹⁰⁷ Gerard Braunthal, 'The SPD', in Conradt, David et al. (eds.), *Power Shift in Germany* (New York, 2000), p. 31.

the post of Foreign Minister for example, had been an activist in the student movement but he had no intention of reviving the radical antifascist slogans of that time.¹⁰⁸

The SPD-Green coalition under Gerhard Schröder championed an approach to German history that differed both from that of the CDU and that of the SPD in the 1960s and 70s. Unlike the Social Democrats of the Brandt era, the new government wanted to create a Germany that, whilst mindful of its past, was also a confident and leading member of the European community. Distinct from the CDU government of the 1980s and 1990s, the red-green coalition had little interest in reconnecting with the Prussian past and had no desire to continue the theme of German victimhood.

The new approach to German history of the SPD-Green coalition influenced the foreign policy of the new government. In March and April 1999, the decision was made to deploy the Bundeswehr to the Balkans. German military units joined NATO forces in order to stop Slobodan Milosevic and his Serbian forces from committing genocide.¹⁰⁹ To send German troops into action on European soil was a monumental decision. German armies had fought in the Balkans during both world wars, and many people thought it was inappropriate for German troops to return to the region for the third time in a century. Schröder and Fischer both turned the argument around by insisting that because of the Nazi past, the Germans had a particular duty to help prevent yet another genocide on European soil. On 13 May 1999, Joschka Fischer, in front of the Green Party congress, stated that both he and Chancellor Schröder were committed to four principles: never again war and never again Auschwitz; never again genocide and never again fascism.¹¹⁰ Schröder similarly argued that Germans had a moral obligation in Kosovo.¹¹¹ He was careful to point out however that “the Kosovo genocide should not be put on the same level as Auschwitz because it detracts from the singularity of the Holocaust.”¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Ingo Cornlis, ‘Successful Failure? The Impact of the German Student Movement on the Federal Republic of Germany’, in Taberner, Stuart and Finlay, Frank (eds.), *Recasting German Identity* (Rochester, 2002), p. 109.

¹⁰⁹ Hans Kundnani, *Utopia or Auschwitz?* (New York, 2009), p. 1.

¹¹⁰ Joschka Fischer, *Speech by Joschka Fischer at the Green Party Congress in Bielefeld 13 May 1999*, Jeremiah Riember (trans.), http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=3723, (accessed on 15 December 2011).

¹¹¹ ‘Q&A: Gerhard Schröder, Firmly Convinced’, *Washington Post*, 18 April 1999, p. B-01.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, B-01.

These statements of remembrance were transmitted to the naming of streets in Berlin-Mitte after the change from a CDU-led administration to an SPD-PDS coalition in Berlin.

Berlin politics and local elections in 2001

In the wake of the Berlin financial crisis in 2001, the CDU faced a backlash against their position in government. One of the greatest banking disasters in post-war German history occurred during the leadership of Mayor Eberhard Diepgen and the CDU-led House of Representatives. As a result, the SPD joined the PDS and the Greens in 2001 to overthrow Eberhard Diepgen as mayor of Berlin. The PDS agreed to join the SPD to remove Diepgen under one condition, namely that the SPD would schedule new elections for the Berlin House of Representatives in that year.¹¹³ The SPD with co-operation of both the Greens and the PDS officially terminated its coalition with the CDU and the mayorship of Eberhard Diepgen.¹¹⁴ Peter Strieder, the SPD party chairman, declared that the grand coalition had had its day and that the SPD was done with the old business of Eberhard Diepgen.¹¹⁵ On 16 June 2001, the House of Representatives removed Eberhard Diepgen in a vote of no confidence. In the same session, Klaus Wowereit (SPD) was voted by the House of Representatives into the role of mayor, by eighty-nine to seventy-eight votes.¹¹⁶ The SPD-CDU coalition in the Senate of Berlin and House of Representatives was replaced with a provisional SPD-Green coalition.

On 21 October 2001, the scheduled elections for Berlin's House of Representatives and the various BVVs were held. The SPD obtained the largest percentage of votes and secured forty-four seats in the House of Representatives, while the CDU obtained thirty-five and the PDS won thirty-three (Figure 7).¹¹⁷

¹¹³ 'Party Calls for Direct Mayoral Elections in Berlin', *The Independent*, 18 June 2001.

¹¹⁴ 'Berliner SPD will grosse Koalition beenden', *Der Spiegel*, 6 June 2001, p. 1.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹¹⁶ 'Wowereit stürzt Diepgen', *Der Spiegel*, 16 June 2001.

¹¹⁷ Berlin-Brandenburg Wahlamt, 2010.

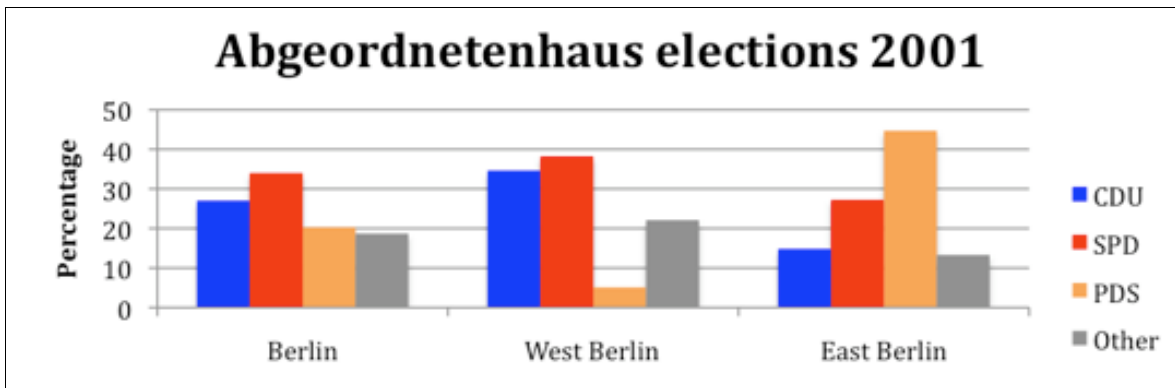


Figure 7: House of Representatives voting percentage for the 2001 elections (Berlin, East Berlin and West Berlin)

As a result, the SPD gained its first majority since 1971 in the House of Representatives and the Social Democrats had the choice of collaborating with one of the three possible coalitions: the FDP and the Greens; the PDS; or with the PDS and the Greens.¹¹⁸ After the SPD failed to negotiate conditions between the FDP and the Greens, the Social Democrats under the leadership of Mayor Wowereit chose to govern Berlin with the PDS.¹¹⁹ The SPD also obtained a majority in the BVV of Berlin-Mitte. The Social Democrats secured 32.9 per cent of the vote, while the CDU obtained 24.3 per cent and the PDS took 18.5 per cent.¹²⁰ With the inclusion of Tiergarten and Wedding, whose populations had historically been loyal to the CDU Party, the voting pattern in Berlin Mitte had been transformed. Prior to the revision of the borough boundaries, the PDS had received a significant percentage of the vote in the former GDR *Bezirk* Mitte. In comparison to the rest of the East Berlin *Bezirke*, the PDS's voting percentage had dropped considerably in Berlin Mitte due to the introduction of approximately 170,000 West Berlin voters.¹²¹ Although the PDS had lost votes in Mitte, the party enjoyed its first democratic coalition in the House of Representatives and Senate as well as having a considerable number of deputies in the BVV. The coalition of the SPD-PDS set forth a new era in both Berlin politics and how streets and squares would be named.

¹¹⁸ J. McKay, 'From Pariah to Power', *German Politics*, 11:2 (2010), pp. 31 – 32.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 32.

¹²⁰ Berlin-Brandenburg Wahlamt, 2010.

¹²¹ Ibid.

Berlin-Mitte street and square names after 2001

During the first ten years of the CDU-led coalition, street commemorations had reflected a desire to reintegrate the Prussian and imperial past into the collective narrative of German history. In the period 1991 to 2001, a total of twenty-five streets in the former GDR *Bezirk* of Mitte had been renamed.¹²² Thirty-six per cent of these street and square names referred to the Prussian epoch. Although one small street memorialised the Jewish people, Neue Judenstraße [new Jewish street], the CDU-led Berlin government did not dedicate any other street or square names to the memory of the victims of Nazism or resistance fighters. If the twenty-five street and square dedications from the CDU-led era are divided into specific commemoration categories, seven categories can be identified: two memorialised artists, academics, and scientists; two referred to geographical locations; four commemorated objects in the landscape such as buildings like city hall [Rathausstraße]; four commemorated politicians; nine memorialised Prussian figures and objects which had origins in the Prussian epoch; and three referred to different religious groups or symbols (Figure 8).¹²³

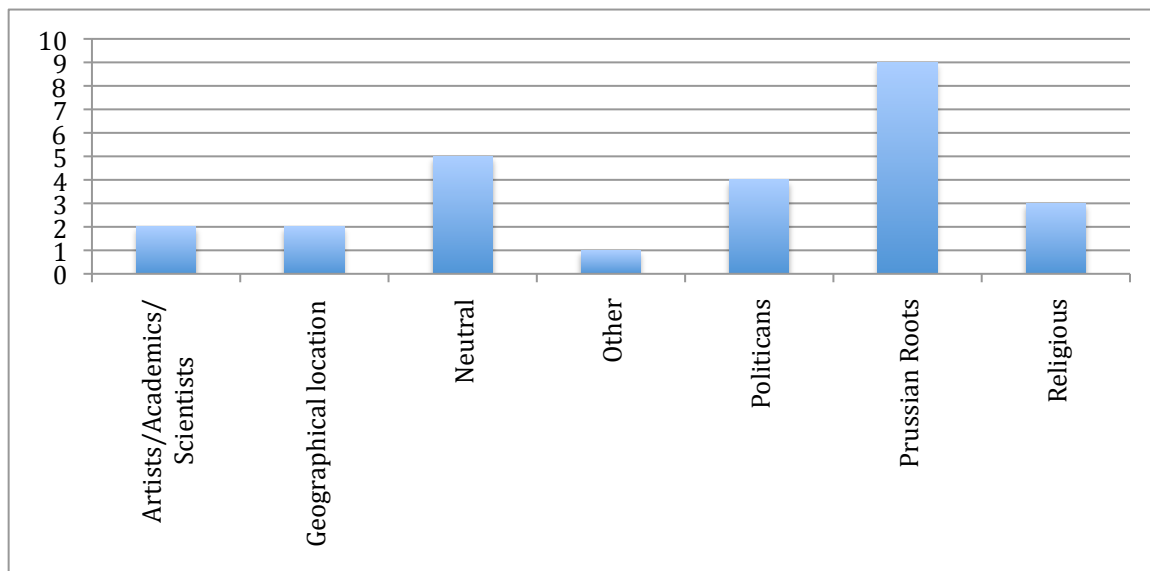


Figure 8: Types of street and square names, 1991 – 2001.

¹²² Senat von Berlin, *Änderung von Benennungen der DDR-Zeit* (Berlin, 1991 - 2010).

¹²³ Senat von Berlin, *Änderung von Benennungen der DDR-Zeit* (Berlin, 1991 - 2010).

In addition, one ‘other’ street dedication referred to a prominent German journalist. The dedication memorialised Axel Springer, who had been a media mogul in Berlin during the city’s division.¹²⁴ He was the owner of Axel-Springer-Publishing in West Berlin, which printed periodicals and tabloids, such as *Die Bild*.¹²⁵ Under the direction of Axel Springer, the Springer-Publishing-Group was considered to be a very right-wing media outlet that produced anti-socialist and anti-communist material. Because of Springer’s vehement attacks on the left and the student activists in 1968, many leftist groups blamed him and the publishing house for instigating an assassination attempt on Rudi Dutschke.¹²⁶ Dutschke, a leading spokesperson and face of the 68er student movement in Germany, was one of Springer’s targets in his anti-communist publications. Springer had labelled Dutschke a “communist insurgent”.¹²⁷ The primary issue with the street dedication to Springer was that the Senate again assumed control over the Mitte BVV. It wanted to de-commemorate Lindenstraße and dedicated part of the street to Axel Springer on the border of Mitte and another West Berlin *Bezirk*, Kreuzberg. Although the CDU and Senate members did not intend to replace a GDR street name with Springer’s dedication, the debate ensued because of Springer’s background and the tactics that the CDU used to rename the street. Many on the left argued that the dedication to Springer was another attack on the leftist parties. In addition, the PDS, the SPD, and the Greens believed that it was not up to them, as representatives of Berlin, but up to the district deputy councillors in charge of the local BVV to have control over commemorative name dedications.¹²⁸ However, the vote like in the case of the Niederkirchnerstraße, was left to the House of Representatives to discuss. The three parties that opposed the Springer dedication abstained from the vote.¹²⁹ Each of the party members withheld their vote because they contended that it was up to the BVV in Mitte to decide whether or not the street should be renamed. Conversely CDU members in the House of Representatives all

¹²⁴ Eric Solsten, *Germany: A country study* (Washington DC, 1996), p. 399.

¹²⁵ Martin Klimke, *The Other Alliance: student protest in West Germany and the United States in the global sixties* (Princeton, 2010), p. 78.

¹²⁶ Klimke, p. 78.

¹²⁷ Mike O’Donnell, *Sixties Radicalism and Social Movement Activism: Retreat or Resurgence?* (London, 2010), p. 152.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Norbert Freund, ‘Kulturausschuß will Straße oder Platz für Axel Springer’, *Berliner Zeitung*, 22 November 1994.

voted for the change and the street was renamed in 1996. In 2008, another controversy ensued in Mitte and Kreuzberg. The proposal was to rename Kochstraße to Rudi-Dutschke-Straße in Kreuzberg, a leftist party stronghold. After years of debate, the Rudi-Dutschke-Straße ironically intersected the Axel-Springer-Straße, which connected the long-time nemesisses at the border of Mitte and Kreuzberg.

The political changes that had taken place, both in Berlin as a whole and in *Bezirk Mitte* led to an immediate shift in the approach taken to renaming of streets. In 2001 four street names in the Mitte district were given new names. The district commemorated three German women and one geographical location. The SPD-PDS delegates honoured two writers, Margarete Steffin, a literary writer who had tuberculosis and fled into exile in the Soviet Union when the NSDAP gained political power in Germany, and Anna Louisa Karsch, an eighteenth-century poet who had gained immense popularity in Berlin for her work with the poor.¹³⁰ The red-red coalition also memorialised a female victim of Nazism, Gertrud Kolmar, a Berlin language teacher who was murdered in the Auschwitz concentration camp.¹³¹

In 2002, the Mitte BVV worked in cooperation with the “Memorial Plaque Commission” [*Gedenktafelkommission*], which is a committee of Berlin council members and historians that organises dedications to recognise figures and events important to national or local history.¹³² The Memorial Plaque Commission and the BVV set guidelines concerning the rededication of street and square names in *Bezirk Mitte*. On 6 November 2002, the Memorial Plaque Commission held a referendum for the three areas, namely the old East German *Bezirk* of Mitte along with the former West German *Bezirke* of Tiergarten and Wedding.¹³³ The question posed by the SPD education and culture director, Volker Hobrack, and the Memorial Plaque Commission was: what are the

¹³⁰ Bezirksverordnetenversammlung Berlin-Mitte, ‘Strassenbenennungen nach Frauen’, <http://www.berlin.de/ba-mitte/bezirk/gedenken/strassenbenennungen.html> (accessed on 15 December 2011).

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Gedenktafelkommission Berlin, ‘Gedenken und Gedenktafeln im Bezirk Mitte’, <http://www.berlin.de/ba-mitte/bezirk/gedenken/gedenktafeln.html> (accessed on 15 December 2010).

¹³³ Bezirksverordnetenversammlung Mitte von Berlin, ‘Vergabe von Frauennamen bei der Benennung neuer Straßen und Plätze’ (Berlin, 2004).

practical arrangements in the dedication or rededication of street and square names?¹³⁴ The BVV agreed that people who had strengthened democracy, who had promoted peace and human rights, or who had contributed to scientific developments were to be commemorated with new street and square names.¹³⁵ Renaming of streets and squares would occur if the person to whom the street was currently dedicated had, during his or her lifetime, promoted nationalistic, militaristic or anti-democratic attitudes.¹³⁶ In the 1990s and 2000s a further question around commemorations centred on gender equality and the lack of street names and dedications to women. As early as 8 March 1994, in order to demonstrate the lack of female commemorative names in the Berlin cityscape, the Bündis 90/Grüne party asked the House of Representatives how many women were dedicated in street and square names.¹³⁷ Herwig Haase responded that an answer was not possible for the entire city of Berlin but he argued that ten streets were renamed in East Berlin after women from 1990 to 1994. In 1995 the issue was brought up again, women activists, who also protested against the renaming of the Clara-Zetkin-Straße, suggested a list of a hundred women to be commemorated in Berlin.¹³⁸ In the discussion over future names in Berlin-Mitte in 2002, Commission members concluded unanimously that future street names in the three districts of Mitte were to be named predominantly after women.¹³⁹ However in 2003 the difference in numbers of men and women in street and square commemorations was nearly ten to one in favour of male names. Political parties and citizen groups both continued to comment on the dearth of street dedications to women on the city map.

In 2004 and 2005, twenty-two street and square names in the three *Bezirke* in Mitte were dedicated to women. In accordance to the guidelines set by the BVV, three street and squares were dedicated to women who were part of the anti-Nazi resistance movement: Agnes Zahn Harnack had been a Berlin-based civil rights activist who had

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Bezirksverordnetenversammlung Mitte von Berlin, 'Verfahrensweise bei Straßen (Plätzen) und deren Neu- bzw. Umbenennungen' (Berlin, 2002).

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, 'Anette Detering über Frauen und Berliner Straßennamen – eine Bilanz der Umbenennungen seit 1989' (Berlin, 1994), p. 24.

¹³⁸ 'Adresse: Hexenplatz', *Die Tageszeitung*, 21 June 1995, p. 20.

¹³⁹ Bezirksverordnetenversammlung Mitte von Berlin, 2004.

promoted women's rights for higher education in the 1930s; Ilse Schaeffer had been a member of the KPD who helped persecuted people hide from the Nazis; and Elisabeth Abegg was a history teacher who had used her house as a temporary shelter and meeting point for Jews in hiding. An additional five streets were dedicated to victims of the NSDAP: Cora Berliner, a Jewish economist who was deported and executed at the Theresienstadt concentration camp; Adele Schreiber, a SPD Reichstag representative who had her German citizenship revoked by the NSDAP; Hannah Arendt, a Jewish political scientist and philosopher, was imprisoned in Camp Gurs –a concentration camp in France– and escaped both Vichy France and Germany to emigrate to America; Ella Trebe, a member of the KPD, was sent to Sachsenhausen concentration camp for being an enemy spy; and Julie Wolfthorn, a Jewish artist who was sent to and murdered at the Theresienstadt concentration camp.¹⁴⁰ It is interesting that two of the commemorated individuals had been members of the KPD. Such dedications would have been unthinkable during the CDU era.

The CDU perhaps rather surprisingly did very little to oppose the street and square dedications of the new coalition government in Berlin. Only one recorded account from the *Berliner Zeitung* commented on the discontent of the CDU Party in regards to the SPD-led street and square naming process. In other national German newspapers –*Berliner Morgenpost*, *Die Zeit*, *Die Tageszeitung*, and the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*– there was no documentation showing dissatisfaction of the CDU to commemorating streets to women who were former members of the KPD. Representatives of the CDU did, on one occasion criticise the coalition's decision to focus on commemorating women. This, the CDU claimed was simply a political stunt that was intended to promote the campaign of the SPD, the PDS and the Greens to implement equal-pay legislation.

While the CDU had not publicly commented on the practices of naming in Mitte during the time of the SPD-PDS coalition, members of the general public continued to take issue with the naming of streets. A specific example was the Karl-Marx-Allee in the

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

former East German districts of Mitte and Friedrichshain.¹⁴¹ On 9 October 2009, the twentieth-year anniversary of the Leipzig ‘Monday Demonstrations’, members of the *Vereinigung der Opfer des Stalinismus* [Association of the Victims of Stalinism (VOS)] along with some local residents protested the continuation of GDR street names.¹⁴² Mario Röllig, director of the Berlin-VOS, stated that “it is incomprehensible to us that twenty years after the peaceful protest that there are so many streets in East Germany that still have names of communist idols.”¹⁴³ The VOS and protestors pasted temporary placards over many of the Karl-Marx-Allee street signs. Each new sign read *Straße der friedlichen Revolution* [Street of the Peaceful Revolution]. Peaceful Revolution referred to the series of street demonstrations against the GDR in 1989.¹⁴⁴ The VOS members temporarily renamed the street because the district councillors in their opinion had not decommissioned all of the former GDR street names that represented the repression under the GDR system, and was thus continuing the tradition of socialism and communism. The protestors believed it was their duty to delete all features of the GDR and communist movement.

The renaming of streets was not as prevalent in *Bezirk* Mitte under the Berlin Red-Red and national Red-Green coalition as it was during the CDU era. The first re-dedication of a street in the former GDR *Bezirk* Mitte occurred on 15 January 2001. The Burgstraße [castle street] was changed to Anna-Louisa-Karsch-Straße, the writer who had fled to the USSR in 1933. In 2003, two streets in *Bezirk* Tiergarten however were renamed, but not in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the BVV Street Commission as neither names were dedicated to women. Yitzhak-Rabin-Straße was named after a Prime Minister of Israel who had been assassinated on 4 November 1995. Ben-Gurion-Straße, commemorating the first Prime Minister of Israel who had played a significant role in the formation of Israel, replaced segments of Entlastungsstraße [relief of strain street], which was a provisional street name given to it after the Berlin Wall was erected in 1961. In the early 1990s, Niels Hansen, a former Israeli ambassador, made the

¹⁴¹ ‘SED-Opfer benennen Karl-Marx-Allee um’, *Junge Freiheit*, 9 October 2009.

¹⁴² ‘Demonstration für die Umbenennung der Karl-Marx-Allee’, *Märkische Oder-Zeitung*, 9 October 2009.

¹⁴³ *Junge Freiheit*, 9 October 2009.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

first proposal to commemorate Yitzhak Rabin. He sent the idea to Eberhard Diepgen and the Senate of Berlin but the proposal was declined.¹⁴⁵ In 2004, the German-Israeli Society submitted a proposal to the Senate of Berlin for a second consideration. The street was voted on and approved by the BVV and the Senate of Berlin. On 29 April 2004, the official ceremony to rededicate the street was attended by Klaus Wowereit, Moshe Katsav [Israel's President], and Shim Stein [the Israeli ambassador].¹⁴⁶ The dedication of these two prominent Israeli leaders, which bordered the lawn of the Bundestag, occurred only a year after construction began of the contested Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in the same area. In 2004 the Berlin government had initiated the construction of a physical landscape in Mitte, which signified that Germany was finally coming to terms with its Nazi and socialist past.

Conclusion

The difference in East and West German cultural heritage and memory was evident in the renaming of streets and squares in Mitte. The PDS-led BVV opposed the de-commemoration of former top GDR officials and old Communists in order to block the CDU's desire to create a physical landscape filled with street names that referred back to the Prussian past. As a result of the provisions in the Capital City Treaty, the power held by the Mitte BVV to rename or preserve street names was transferred to the Berlin Senate, allowing the CDU to impose a West German narrative on East Berlin street and square names. This in turn provoked resistance from both the citizens of Mitte and from the PDS, who argued that their own unique cultural heritage was being erased. Within a span of four years, the CDU was able to delete the GDR from the narrative of the German past that is celebrated in the street names of Mitte. Clearly the CDU did not address the concerns raised by ordinary citizens, prominent members of the public, and group initiatives. In this case, the citizens' understanding of democracy was always secondary to that of the political interests of the political parties, especially the CDU. The main justification given by the CDU for this transformation was that the GDR, like the Third Reich, had been a 'totalitarian' regime, the commemoration of which was utterly

¹⁴⁵ 'Bezirk Mitte will Rabinstrasse', *Der Tagesspiegel*, 18 June 2001.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

inappropriate in the street names of the capital city of Europe's largest democracy. Significantly however, many of the new names given to these streets were associated not with democracy but with the Germany of the Prussian kings and the *Kaiserreich*.

After the 1998 and 2001 elections, the SPD-led national and local governments attempted to create a new type of German identity. The SPD-Green coalition in the Bundestag focused on the normalisation of the German past so the country could become an effective European leader. On the other hand, the Schröder government did not try to ignore or revitalise the crimes of the past. This idea of normalisation was distinctively different from the attempts of the CDU during the Kohl era that had sought to revive Germany's Prussian and imperial history at the same time as equating the dictatorship of the Communists with that of the Nazis. These very diverse approaches to the German past led to the CDU, the PDS, the SPD, and citizens of Mitte adopting different positions on the issue of street and square names in *Bezirk Mitte*.

Chapter Four

Off the Wall: Prenzlauer Berg, 1990 – 2001

In this final chapter, I consider how the territorial claim over space and memory was not limited to Mitte. Other East Berlin *Bezirke* also became contested sites. For example, inherited GDR commemorative names were highly debated over in Prenzlauer Berg, a district located just north of Mitte. This is not surprising, as Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg shared a similar pattern in their street and square commemorations from 1949 to 1989. Many of these names were based on the politicised memory that GDR officials created during their time in power. For example, GDR politicians, resistance fighters from the Nazi era, and old communists were among those most frequently commemorated in each of the *Bezirke*. Additionally, both districts had a comparable number of dedications from the period of the GDR. There were forty-eight streets and squares commemorated in Mitte and fifty-four in Prenzlauer Berg.¹ Furthermore, a number of streets and squares were dedicated to the same people in both districts. Two such examples are Käthe Niederkirchner and Heinz Kapelle, who were communist resisters against the Third Reich.² While Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg had similar types of street and square names until 1989, the cityscapes significantly differed after 1990. Thirty-one per cent, or fifteen out of forty-eight street and square names, were de-commemorated in Mitte between 1990 and 2001. In the same time frame, Prenzlauer Berg only changed eleven per cent of its former GDR dedications or six out of fifty-four. Furthermore, none of the park names were changed in Prenzlauer Berg after 1990.

The political parties involved in Mitte were also part of the debates in Prenzlauer Berg over street and square names. This time however, the SPD initiated the first round of name changes which all occurred between 1992 and 1994. The Social Democrats were able to make these initial changes as they had a sizable majority in the Prenzlauer Berg

¹ Kaupert Media, 'Kaupert Straßeführer durch Berlin 2010', <http://berlin.kauperts.de/> (accessed on 5 March 2011).

² RV Verlag, 'Berlin Stadtplan' (Berlin, 1993).

BVV. This political party, unlike in Mitte, had full authority in the renaming process.³ With this power, the SPD renamed the largest number of streets in the district and replaced them with a particular version of its politicised memory. In total, the Social Democrats altered four former GDR street names. The SPD also changed one street name that was commemorated before the existence of the GDR. Besides the SPD's changes in Prenzlauer Berg, the CDU was able to alter a number of street names in the district. Although it did not have any political control in the BVV, these changes were possible because of a statute in the Berlin Streets Act [*Berliner Straßengesetz*]. The Berlin Streets Act gave the Senate, specifically the CDU and Herwig Haase, jurisdiction over other Berlin districts. The act stated that if any street or square dedication referred to a person belonging to either 'totalitarian' regime then it must be renamed. The CDU used this bylaw and, in a similar fashion to Mitte, created a system of names that referenced the Prussian era. Moreover the CDU took another historical step towards the 'normalisation' of Germany's past, as none of these new dedications remembered any person or event from the Nazi era. The PDS, on the other hand, held the second most seats in the district BVV in 1992. During this time, the PDS, as it did in Mitte, defended the 'positive' attributes of the GDR era. After the 1995 elections, the PDS claimed a majority in the Prenzlauer Berg BVV and ended the renaming of former GDR commemorative names in the district. In addition to these political actors, many ordinary citizens, just as they had in Mitte, voiced their diverse opinions on the proposals put forth by the various parties.

The overall aim of this chapter is to show how the CDU, the PDS, and the SPD used similar tactics in the renaming processes in both Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg. It is evident however the outcomes for the two *Bezirke* were very different. The difference depended on how much control each political actor had in the renaming process. These distinctions are exemplified in the three case studies that categorise the positions of the CDU, the SPD, and the PDS. First, this chapter considers the SPD's name changes when it was the dominant party in the district BVV from 1992 to 1995. Second, an examination is made of how the CDU was able to use the Berlin Streets Act to rename two streets, the

³ Inter Nationes, *Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany*, <http://www.iuscomp.org/gla/statutes/GG.htm> (22 September 2011).

Dimitroffstraße and the Artur-Becker-Straße, both of which were renamed in 1995. With these street name changes, this chapter argues that the CDU mobilised a particular politicised memory that was not confined to Mitte, but extended across Berlin. Finally, a case study considers the dispute over the retention of the Ernst-Thälmann-Park. This example demonstrates how the PDS heavily defended the continuation of ‘positive’ legacies and memories carried over from the GDR era, specifically antifascism.

Political makeup of the Prenzlauer Berg BVV

The Prenzlauer Berg BVV predominantly carried out the actions of renaming streets and squares in the district. This political office was made up of the same parties that held seats in the Mitte district council. The CDU, the PDS, and the SPD all had members who sat as BVV councillors. When comparing the number of district councillors in Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg from 1990 to 2001, there is a similar political makeup in the two districts (Figures 9 and 10).⁴

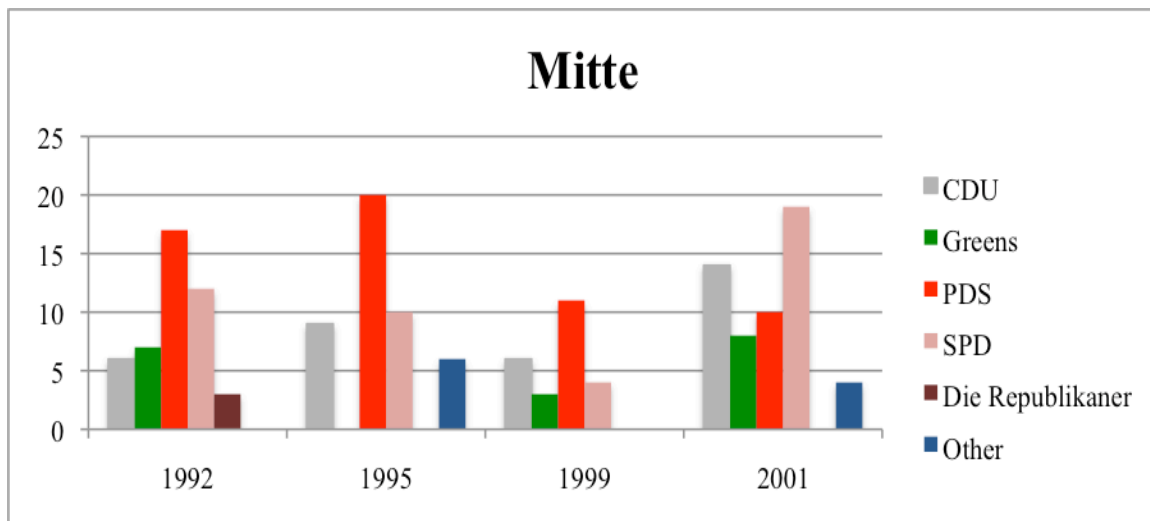


Figure 9: Berlin-Mitte BVV members by political party, 1992 - 2001.

⁴ Edition Luisenstadt, ‘Wahlen’, <http://www.luise-berlin.de/novitaeten/wahlen/texte/wahl92.htm> (accessed 20 February 2012).

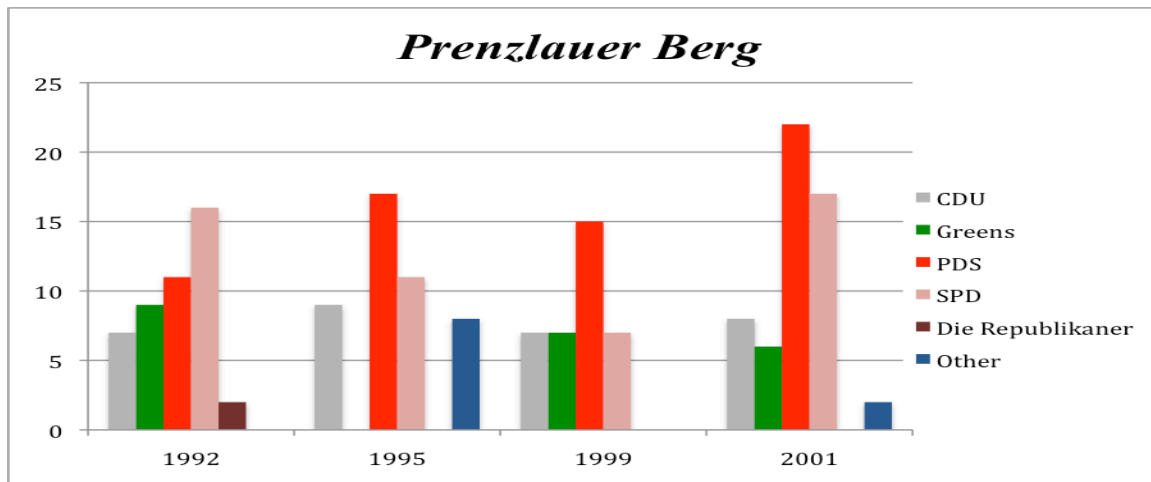


Figure 10: Prenzlauer Berg BVV members by political party, 1992 - 2001

In each of the *Bezirke*, the PDS and SPD were strongly represented in the local councils, while the CDU, for the most part, had the third most deputies in Prenzlauer Berg. To demonstrate this likeness in BVV representation, the CDU had seven councillors in Mitte and six in Prenzlauer Berg during 1992, but increased their total to nine in both districts in 1995.⁵ While the PDS had seventeen in Mitte in 1992 and eleven in Prenzlauer Berg, they too increased their number of representatives after the 1995 elections to seventeen in Prenzlauer Berg and twenty in Mitte.⁶ Finally, the SPD had sixteen members in Prenzlauer Berg and twelve in Mitte in 1992, but the party lost votes in both districts in 1995, resulting in it having ten councillors in Mitte and eleven in Prenzlauer Berg.⁷

Although the SPD was not always the dominant party in both districts, the party was able to elect mayors in Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg from 1990 to 1995. Gerhard Keil was the mayor in Mitte and Manfred Dennert was the mayor in Prenzlauer Berg from 1992 to 1995.⁸ In 1995, the BVV make-up had changed and both districts elected new mayors. Joachim Zeller, who was a CDU representative, secured the mayoralty in Mitte, and Reinhard Kraetzer, a SPD member, obtained the position in Prenzlauer Berg. As the PDS had more councillors in each of the districts, the Berlin grand coalition between the CDU

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Berlin-Brandenburg Wahlamt, 'Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg - Berliner Wahlen', (2010), <http://www.wahlen-berlin.de/> (accessed on 27 January 2012).

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Maria Curter, 'Berlins Bezirksbürgermeister', in Luisenstadt Edition (Berlin, 1997), <http://www.luisse-berlin.de/bms/bmstxt97/9707dokc.htm> (accessed 20 February 2012).

and SPD barred the PDS from overall control in either *Bezirke* in 1995 and elected representatives from each other's parties.⁹

As stated in chapter three, the political makeup of the BVV is especially important when it comes to renaming streets, squares, and parks. It is this political office that controls the commemoration process. In the case of the Prenzlauer Berg BVV, the SPD authorised all commemorative name changes because of the sizable majority it enjoyed from 1992 to 1995. After the 1995 elections, the PDS had the greatest number of deputies in the political office and blocked all proposals to remove any dedication from the GDR era.

The SPD's street name changes, 1992 – 1994

The Social Democrats renamed five streets during their time in office. The names targeted in Prenzlauer Berg followed a very similar pattern to that set by the Christian Democrats in Mitte. Both the CDU and the SPD focused on street names given to former GDR officials and revolutionaries who promoted the founding ideologies of communism. In 1992, the SPD suggested renaming the longest road in Berlin, the Leninallee. The street commemorated Vladimir Ilyich Lenin [1870 – 1924] who led the Bolsheviks in overthrowing the Provisional Government in 1917. Lenin based his revolution or, as some historians argue, his coup d'état on the doctrine of Marxist ideology to form a "socialist order".¹⁰ He developed a new philosophy of socialism based on Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx's theory, which is referred to as Marxism-Leninism.¹¹ The SED implemented this theory as the leading political doctrine in the formation of the German Democratic Republic.¹² The SPD believed that the preservation of Lenin's name in the cityscape would have continued to legitimise the GDR state. Additionally, the celebration of Lenin would have run counter to the reformed ideologies of the SPD party. This reform had occurred in 1959, when the Social Democrats forsook and separated

⁹ 'Bürgermeister gewählt', *Berliner Zeitung*, 8 February 1996.

¹⁰ Christopher Read, *Lenin: a Revolutionary Life* (New York, 2005), p. 275.

¹¹ Robert Service, *Lenin: a Biography* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 1.

¹² Gert-Joachim Glaessne, *German Democracy: from post-World War II to the Present Day* (New York, 2005), p. 170.

themselves from all forms of Marxist dogma as part of the Godesberg Program.¹³ The biggest change in the SPD's political doctrine was the acceptance of free market economy and the restricted role of state government.¹⁴ Instead of working towards socialism in Germany, the SPD "developed from a working class party to a party of the nation as a whole."¹⁵ In alignment with its ideologies, Mayor Manfred Dennert climbed up a ladder with a black felt pen in hand to symbolically cross out the Leninallee placard. He then wrote the previous, original street's name, Landsberger Allee, over it. This was done on 1 February 1992.¹⁶ Landsberger pertained to the town of Altlandsberg, which was located in the nearby state of Brandenburg. Dennert claimed that the change had to happen because "a certain past had to be dealt with" that no longer had a place in German history.¹⁷

A large number of citizens in the district agreed with the SPD's positions on renaming the Leninallee, and the SPD's attitudes towards the past. For example, many people in Prenzlauer Berg argued that they wanted the name changed, "so that we [East Germans] are not continuously and painfully reminded of the forty lost years."¹⁸ Additionally, one citizen claimed that "with the return address of Leninallee one is, even outside Berlin, still perpetually recognisable as an East Berliner –and who wants that?"¹⁹ These positions on Leninallee were also the attitudes of a number of people in Prenzlauer Berg towards the GDR when it still existed. This discontent can be traced back to the late 1970s and 80s. Unlike in Mitte, which was a political and cultural parading ground for the GDR, Prenzlauer Berg became a place where ordinary citizens sought an 'alternative' lifestyle to the official GDR system. Numerous East German writers, musicians, and artists moved into the district, as cheap GDR housing was available and the 'alternative

¹³ Social Democratic Party of Germany, 'The Bad Godesberg Program', in Jan Goldstein and John W. Boyer (eds.), *Readings in Western Civilization Vol. 9* (Chicago, 1987), pp. 419 - 425.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ 'Strassennamen', *Die Tageszeitung*, 1 February 1992, p. 40.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 40.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 40.

¹⁸ Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin* (Chicago, 1997), p. 209.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 209.

scene' began to grow.²⁰ The district, as a result, became a centre of bohemian lifestyle, or, as two GDR writers –Ingrid Hahnel and Klaus-Dieter Hahnel– stated, “Prenzlauer Berg long ceased to be a mere residential district: it was a state of mind.”²¹ The borough also became a place of open defiance to the GDR system. For example, a number of artists who openly spoke out against the SED-led government organised exhibits and concerts in defiance to the socialist system.²² Moreover, Prenzlauer Berg was one of the main centres of protest in the Peaceful Revolution in 1989. This was observed on the 7 October 1989, which was also the fortieth anniversary of the GDR's formation. Approximately 3,000 people demonstrated in the southwest part of Prenzlauer Berg against the GDR's lack of political and personal freedoms.²³ However this gathering, as people chanted “Press freedom – freedom of opinion!”, was broken up and brutally curtailed by the *Stasi* and East Berlin police.²⁴ The SED's action against the Prenzlauer Berg protestors was intended to provoke fear in the dissidents deterring another ‘Monday Demonstration’ in Leipzig as well as the possibility of more uprisings in other East German cities.²⁵

However, not everyone in the district was defiant towards the state. Many ordinary citizens in Prenzlauer Berg had learned to live ‘normal’ lives or benefited from being part of the elite class in the GDR system.²⁶ Some of these positive attitudes towards the GDR are likely to have been carried over in the Berlin Republic after the demise of the East German state, but it was not possible to procure any documentation showing that citizens in Prenzlauer Berg had protested in order to retain the Leninallee commemoration. There are three possible explanations for the lack of available documentation. First, as stated in the sources section of this thesis, newspapers choose what they present to their audiences.

²⁰ Friederike Eigler, ‘Art and Money: Cultural Innovations within the Urban Setting of Prenzlauer Berg’, in Barbara Becker-Cantarino (ed.), *Berlin in Focus: cultural transformations in Germany* (Westport, 1996), p. 90.

²¹ Wolfgang Beutin et al., *A history of German literature: from the beginnings to the present day*, in Clare Kroyzl (trans.), (New York, 1993), p. 659.

²² John Gawthrop and Jack Holland, *The Rough Guide to Berlin* (London, 2001), p. 174.

²³ Berlinonline Stadtportal, <http://www.berlin.de/tourismus/touren/wendezeit-1989/> (accessed 23 February 2012).

²⁴ Hannes Bahrmann and Christoph Links, *The Fall of the Wall: the path to German reunification* (Berlin, 1999), p. x.

²⁵ Heinrich August Winkler, *Germany: The Long Road West, 1933 – 1990* (Oxford, 2000), p. 545.

²⁶ Mary Fulbrook, *The People's State* (New Haven, 1996), p. 293.

This type of story may have been one of those cases where newspaper editors decided that their audiences would not be interested in such protests. Having stated that, I do concede that there is a possibility that there were published articles on the unpopularity of removing the Leninallee. However I could not find any among the major newspaper sources in Germany. Second, there is a possibility that no demonstrations occurred. Citizens in Prenzlauer Berg may not have felt the urge to voice their discontent for any number of reasons, such as being labelled an ‘outsider’ or being considered ‘old fashioned’. Finally, some of the citizens, who may have initiated public protests, might have felt disenfranchised because of failed attempts to stop the renaming of other commemorative names or the removal of socialist-inspired memorials around the city.

While there is no evidence of Leninallee protests, demonstrations were made against other attempts to remove dedications to Lenin in surrounding East Berlin districts. For example the Lenin statue in the neighbouring *Bezirk* of Friedrichshain was pverly controversial and highly documented. By considering the protests in Friedrichshain, a point of reference can be made that might cast some light on what might have happened in Prenzlauer Berg in reference to the Leninallee. Furthermore, the Lenin statue is appropriate as a comparison to the Leninallee as it was located on the border of Prenzlauer Berg and Friedrichshain. Protests to retain the statue also occurred within the same period of time as the renaming of the Leninallee. Additionally, the Lenin statue is probably one of the most documented cases of iconoclasm in Berlin, and has continuously been used in contemporary pop culture. For example, the statue was the major theme in the final scenes of *Good-bye, Lenin!*, a movie documenting East German life before and after the Wall.²⁷ Disapproval of the removal of the Lenin monument in the district of Friedrichshain provides a focal point for the undocumented protests that might have been witnessed in Prenzlauer Berg.

Situated on Leninallee, in the middle of the Leninplatz, a massive red, granite statue of Lenin was erected in 1970. However, in October 1991, the Berlin Senator for Urban Development, Volker Hassemer (CDU), removed the Lenin statue from the protected

²⁷ Agata Anna Lisiak, *Urban Cultures in (Post) Colonial Central Europe* (West Lafayette, 2011), p.131; Wolfgang Becker, *Good-bye, Lenin!* (Culver City, 2004).

monument list in Berlin. Shortly thereafter, the Christian Democrats and Social Democrats both agreed that the statue should be removed.²⁸ The CDU argued along the same lines, as it did with other former GDR street names, that Lenin formed the ideology of Germany's second 'totalitarian' regime.²⁹ Furthermore, the CDU stated that Lenin was a "despot and murderer".³⁰ Conversely, the PDS also followed its party line on the inherited history of the GDR. It argued that if Lenin went, so must the *Siegestsäule*, the famous Prussian war monument in West Berlin. The PDS regarded both monuments as being "political".³¹ More importantly, citizens argued that the image of Lenin was "part of the history of the neighbourhood".³² Community initiatives entitled "Lenindenkmal" were formed to protect the memorial.³³ Members of the initiative argued, "the monument belonged to the housing complex on Lenin Square. It did not bother anyone."³⁴ Other initiative members constructed large posters that vilified West Germans as 'occupiers' who feared "Lenin's symbolic power".³⁵ One poster read: "Ihr BRD-Besitzer! Fürchtet ihr sogar den Lenin aus Stein? [You Federal Republic of Germany occupiers! Are you even afraid of this Lenin made out of stone?]."³⁶ Other protestors argued: "it's not about Lenin, rather about demonstrating our power and not letting ourselves be pushed around."³⁷ In other words, citizens believed their history was being dismissed unfairly and that they had no other choice but to protest in order to make a territorial claim to their memory landscape.

Following the renaming of the Leninallee, further de-commemorations took place in Prenzlauer Berg in 1993 with the SPD renaming four streets. In line with the CDU and the SPD's campaign against the dedications to former GDR officials, the SPD proposed to change Willi-Bredel-Straße to Schivelbeiner Straße. Willi Bredel had been on the

²⁸ Ladd, p. 196.

²⁹ David Clay Large, *Berlin* (New York, 2000), p. 562.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 562.

³¹ Ibid., p. 562.

³² German Historical Institute, 'Protest against Demolition of the Lenin Monument in Berlin 9 November', http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_image.cfm?image_id=3170 (accessed 15 February 2012).

³³ Lisiak, p. 131.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 131.

³⁵ German Historical Institute, (accessed 15 February 2012).

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ladd, p. 197.

Central Committee of the SED from 1953 until his death in 1964.³⁸ The SPD proposed to discontinue the street name of Schivelbeiner Straße, which referred to the town Schivelbein or Świdwin located in Poland near the border of Germany. Initially this name was not controversial, but its appropriateness was questioned three years later when the CDU initiated their renaming scheme in Prenzlauer Berg. The PDS charged the SPD with trying to reconnect with the old borders of Germany and the days of Prussian royalty, as PDS members believed the CDU had also done in the renaming of streets and squares in Mitte. However, the SPD denied the accusations and stated the name Schivelbeiner was reinstated to continue “the friendly co-existence between the two states, Germany and Poland.”³⁹ The Prenzlauer Berg mayor, Reihard Kraetzer, further stated “no one in the SPD was dreaming of a Germany with borders of 1937.”⁴⁰ Unlike the CDU’s resurrection of Prussian memory, the Social Democrats maintained it had rights to re-establish such a name because the SPD had directly confronted the past, as witnessed by Willy Brandt’s famous gesture in Warsaw in 1970.

Another revelation of the SPD’s plans to re-write Germany’s past was the renaming of Franz-Dahlem-Straße to Ella-Kay-Straße. The Social Democrats wanted to decommission Franz Dahlem’s [1892 – 1981] dedication because he had been an active member of the Central Committee.⁴¹ Instead of retaining a former GDR official’s name in the cityscape, the Social Democrats changed the street name to memorialise a former SPD member, Ella Kay [1895 – 1988], who had been a Social Democrat since 1919. After the Nazis’ takeover in 1933, Kay was a political victim of the NSDAP and was discharged from her position as the director of the youth ministry in Prenzlauer Berg.⁴² During the war, she had fought illegally against the NSDAP in Berlin, before becoming the elected mayor in Prenzlauer Berg in 1946. Her appointment as mayor was short lived however as the Soviet Military Administration dismissed her later that year. Her successor, another SPD member, was also replaced a year later but this time for a more

³⁸ Ibid., p. 197.

³⁹ ‘Brief an polnische Kleinstadt erhitzt die Gemüter’, *Berliner Zeitung*, 8 August 1996.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Hans-Jürgen Mende, *Lexikon Alle Berliner Straßen and Plätze* (Berlin, 1998), p. 577 – 578.

⁴² Ibid., p. 487.

favourable SED official.⁴³ Kay, as a result, immigrated to West Berlin where she sat as a member of the House of Representatives until 1968.⁴⁴ Before the commemoration of Kay on a street sign, the number of Prenzlauer Berg street and square names dedicated to resistance fighters was thirty-eight. Only two of these commemorative names specifically memorialised SPD resisters, while the rest were dedicated to communists and those people who held no direct political affiliation. The removal of the name of a GDR official from a street commemoration had a dual purpose: the SPD effectively whitewashed one illegitimate former SED member and replaced the street placard with a member of their own, who embodied the traditions of the Social Democrats' politicised memory.

While the SPD highlighted how fellow Social Democrats had resisted the Nazis, the party also made examples of Jewish victims from the Nazi era. In one such instance, the Wilhelm-Florin-Straße was changed to the Lilli-Henoch-Straße. Wihlem Florin [1899 – 1942] was a KPD member in the Reichstag from the mid 1920s until Hitler effectively disbanded the political organ with the Enabling Act in March 1933.⁴⁵ During the war, Wihlem Florin fled to the Soviet Union where, with Franz Dahlem and other KPD members, he formed an anti-Nazi organisation, the National Committee for a Free Germany [NKFD].⁴⁶ Although Florin had not participated in the GDR and had played a part in the resistance to the Nazis, the SPD replaced his street dedication. One reason suggested for this was that it was done in reprisal for Florin's comments against the SPD. When, in 1935, he placed the blame for Hitler's rise to power entirely on the Social Democrats. After a KPD leadership meeting in Moscow, entitled the 'Brussels Conference', Florin stated that the SPD "bore the historical guilt for the victory of fascism."⁴⁷ Instead of retaining Florin's street sign dedication, the SPD chose to commemorate Lilli Henoch, a Jewish victim of the Holocaust. Henoch was a Jewish track and field athlete who broke numerous official and unofficial records in the mid- to late 1920s. She was also employed as a gymnastics teacher at a Jewish elementary school in

⁴³ Ibid., p. 487.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 487.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 376.

⁴⁶ Norman M. Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945 - 1949* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 16.

⁴⁷ Eric D. Weitz, *Creating German communism, 1890-1990: from Popular Protests to Socialist State* (Princeton, 1997), p. 295.

Prenzlauer Berg. Because of her Jewish heritage, Henoch was targeted and became a victim of the Nazis' 'Final Solution'.

The last street name that the SPD replaced was the Weneuchener Straße which became Margarete-Sommer-Straße. Weneuchener referred to a small town just north of Berlin that had been commemorated in Prenzlauer Berg's cityscape since 1896 and remained dedicated during the GDR era. The street name was changed and referred to Margarete Sommer, a fervent opponent of the Nazis' persecution of Jews. She had worked with Bishop Preysing, a stern opponent of the NSDAP who argued "we [Germans] have fallen into the hands of criminals and fools [NSDAP]".⁴⁸ Preysing and Sommer worked together to reveal the horrific acts against baptised and non-baptised Jews in Germany by constantly appealing to Pope Pius XII and other German bishops in order to expose the Nazis' efforts to exterminate a whole race of people.⁴⁹ Sommer also collected detailed information on the living conditions in concentration camps and SS firing squads from which she wrote reports that were sent to the Vatican.⁵⁰

There is an overall theme that ran through the SPD's street dedications. Each street name formed a layer in the party's politicised memory of the Nazi and GDR eras. First, each street was renamed to delegitimize parts of the GDR legacy that were not in line with the party's position. Apart from one street name, the Social Democrats changed street names that referred to political officials and leaders who represented the failed system of socialism. Second, the SPD honoured the politicised memory that the party had formulated since 1945. It believed Germany had a responsibility, as Kurt Schumacher had first stated, to all post-war Germans to remember and never forget the crimes committed in the Nazi era.

⁴⁸ Gabriel Wilensky, *Six Million Crucifixions: How Christian Teachings about Jews Paved the Road to the Holocaust* (San Diego, 2010), p. 196.

⁴⁹ Richard L. Rubenstein and John K. Roth, *Approaches to Auschwitz: the Holocaust and its legacy* (Atlanta, 1987), p. 278.

⁵⁰ Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand, 'Margarete Sommer', <http://www.gdw-berlin.de/en/recess/biographies/biographie/view-bio/sommer/> (accessed 1 March 2012).

The CDU in Prenzlauer Berg, 1994 – 1995

Despite the SPD's renaming efforts in Prenzlauer Berg, Herwig Haase and the CDU submitted two street renaming proposals in 1994. Haase asked the Prenzlauer Berg BVV to remove the names Dimitroffstraße and Artur-Becker-Straße. For the same reason as in Mitte, the CDU wished to create a system of names that would delete old communists from the cityscape and impose a Prussian narrative on the suburb's streets. This section describes the two failed proposals that the CDU submitted to the Prenzlauer Berg BVV. The section then identifies how the CDU was later able to change these former GDR dedications by using a bylaw in the Berlin Streets Act.

The renaming of the Dimitroffstraße was the CDU's main goal in Prenzlauer Berg, as it was included in the Independent Commission's report in March 1994.⁵¹ It was the only street outside of Mitte that the Commission members recommended be replaced. The street was dedicated to Georgi Dimitroff [Dimitrov], a devoted Bulgarian communist. Dimitroff helped form the Bulgarian Communist Party in 1919 and he established the party as the ruling faction in Bulgaria after the Second World War.⁵² Furthermore, Dimitroff was accused of setting fire to the Reichstag in 1933. After the Nazis arrested him, he represented himself at the trial where he became widely known for his legal tactics. He stood against one of the Nazis' top officials, Hermann Göring, and denounced the strategy being used by the fascist party against his fellow communists. His ability to reverse the accusations and claims of Göring and the Nazis won his acquittal.⁵³ His performance earned him a position in the Communist International [Comintern] and he went on to become the leading cultural theorist for Comintern in 1935.⁵⁴ CDU officials and Independent Commission members argued that the memory of Dimitroff had to be removed from the cityscape because of his anti-democratic profile and connections to Stalin.⁵⁵ The Commission recommended that the Dimitroffstraße be renamed after two

⁵¹ Unabhängige Kommission zur Umbenennung von Straßen, *Abschlussbericht* (Senat von Berlin, 1994), pp. 14 – 16.

⁵² John Simkin, 'Dimitrov', <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/GERdimitrov.htm> (accessed 20 February 2012).

⁵³ 'Dimitrov joins communist immortals', *Life*, 25 July 1949, pp. 25 – 27.

⁵⁴ Homi K. Bhabha, *Nation and narration* (London, 1990), p. 96.

⁵⁵ Unabhängige Kommission zur Umbenennung von Straßen, 'Abschlussbericht' (Berlin, 1994), p. 16.

people. One part of the street would dedicate Matthias Erzberger, a member of the Catholic Centre Party who was part of the anti-war movement during the Great War era, and the other part would commemorate Rudolf Hilferding, a victim of Nazism and the former finance minister of the Weimar Republic.⁵⁶ Unlike earlier CDU recommendations in Mitte that referred to people, places, and objects from the Prussian era, the proposal for the renaming of Dimitroffstraße suggested two politicians who advocated democratic principles.

In addition to Dimitroff, the CDU suggested that another communist be deleted from the streetscape. The CDU and Haase proposed that the Artur-Becker-Straße be changed to Kniprodestraße. The GDR commemoration related to Artur Becker, a German communist who fought in the International Brigades against the fascists during the Spanish Civil War from 1937 to 1938.⁵⁷ He was reportedly captured by Spanish Nationalists who tortured, interrogated, and killed him in Spain on 16 May 1938. His actual cause of death, however, is still uncertain. Nonetheless, East German officials utilised the ambiguity surrounding Becker's death to their advantage. The SED memorialised him in the 'collective memory' of antifascist heroes, as officials labelled him a brave young communist who stood up against the fascists and 'fought to the last cartridge'.⁵⁸ In addition GDR officials gave medals in his honour for the highest achievement in the Free German Youth (FDJ)⁵⁹, and schoolchildren created projects entitled 'Artur Becker: our role model, our friend'.⁶⁰ Because of Becker's status in the GDR's hall of antifascist heroes and the uncertain circumstances behind his death, the CDU insisted that it return the Artur-Becker-Straße to its original commemorative name, the Kniprodestraße. This name referred to Winrich von Kniprode, a fourteenth-century Teutonic knight, who held a thirty-year term as Grand Master.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. 16 – 17.

⁵⁷ Claus Koyne, 'Gemeinsamer Nenner', *Berliner Zeitung*, 27 November 1995.

⁵⁸ Josie McLellen, *Antifascism and Memory in East Germany: Remembering the International Brigades, 1945 – 1989* (Oxford, 2004), p. 105.

⁵⁹ 'Dimitrov Hindenburg?', *Die Zeit*, 10 November 1995, p. 46.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 105.

⁶¹ Klaus Conrad, 'Winrich von Kniprode (um 1310 – 1382), Hochmeister des Deutschen Ordens (1352 – 1382)', <http://www.rheinischegeschichte.lvr.de/persoenlichkeiten/K/Seiten/WinrichvonKniprode.aspx> (accessed on 22 February 2012).

These proposed changes in Prenzlauer Berg were part of a larger citywide renaming process that included two streets in Mitte: the Clara-Zetkin-Straße, which was described in the last chapter; and the Hans-Beimler-Straße, which commemorated another famous communist fighter who died in the Spanish Civil War.⁶² Hans Beimler was deeply ingrained in the antifascist collective memory of the GDR. SPD mayors from three eastern *Bezirke* –Friedrichshain, Mitte, and Prenzlauer Berg– argued against the CDU’s goal to change street names that the local councils did not want to alter. Additionally, the commemorative names referred to old communists who died before the formation of the GDR. Mitte’s Mayor, Gerhard Keil, stated that the SPD would use all their resources in the Senate to oppose the name changes.⁶³ Mayor Manfred Dennert also argued along his party’s line and asserted that “the renaming should really be up to the districts” and not the Senate.⁶⁴ The PDS argued that it was “problematic” and did not serve the will of the local residents.⁶⁵ Even further, PDS officials asked why the CDU felt the need to remove Becker since the current Spanish government had just honoured the heroic acts of the communist resistance during the Spanish Civil War.⁶⁶ Since the CDU was outnumbered in the Prenzlauer Berg BVV, the SPD and the PDS rejected both of the initial street name proposals in the district.

A few months later however, Senator Haase and the CDU redrafted their plan to rename the streets in Prenzlauer Berg. Instead of changing Dimitroffstraße to Erzbergerstraße and Hilferdingstraße, the CDU went against the recommendations of the Independent Commission and proposed the entire Dimitroffstraße be renamed Danziger Straße. Danziger referred to the former Prussian city of Danzig, now called Gdańsk, and located in present-day Poland. However in this round of submissions, Haase and the CDU did not put forward proposals to the Prenzlauer Berg BVV. Instead, they used executive power in the Senate to rename the streets in Prenzlauer Berg on 1 November 1995. The Senate was able to make the changes because of a bylaw in the Berlin Streets Act. The House of Representatives modified an older law that related to the street and

⁶² ‘Straßennamen oder Grillwürstchen?’, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 27 April 1995.

⁶³ ‘Bürgermeister wehren sich’, *Berliner Zeitung*, 29 April 1995.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Berliner Zeitung*, 8 August 1996.

⁶⁶ ‘Angebrachte Zweifel’, *Berliner Zeitung*, 9 December 1995.

square names in a divided Berlin on 16 August 1991. Since the previous law did not cover a unified Berlin, the House of Representatives, which was dominated by CDU members, amended one particular part of the statute, specifically the regulations to §5.⁶⁷ It declared that commemorations to “active opponents of democracy as well as intellectual and political pioneers of National Socialist or of Stalinist tyranny” are to be removed from all commemorations in the cityscape if the local districts did not do it themselves.⁶⁸ The CDU argued that this was indeed the case in Prenzlauer Berg because the BVV deputies had rejected the first set of proposals and had not adequately dealt with the totalitarian past that remained in the cityscape.

A number of ordinary citizens, like their counterparts in other districts, voiced their opposition to the renaming schemes. The *Berliner Zeitung* asked residents whether they agreed with the Senate’s decision to change the street names. Approximately 5,255 phone calls were made to the newspaper in which 4,912 residents wanted the streets to remain as they were, while 343 people wished to see the names de-commemorated.⁶⁹ One letter-to-the-editor piece in the *Berliner Zeitung* asked if he had “misjudged the concepts of democracy” in Prenzlauer Berg.⁷⁰ To the frustration of many Prenzlauer Berg citizens, the CDU ignored their complaints as it had also done with Mitte residents to retain parts of their East German identity and names with which they were familiar.

The dissatisfaction over street renaming was one of a number of larger issues that residents experienced after unification. First, Kohl’s promise of ‘blossoming landscapes’ in East Germany increasingly seemed unlikely to positively affect most citizens in Prenzlauer Berg. The *Bezirk* had one of the highest unemployment rates in the city which varied between 15 and 17 per cent from 1991 to 2001.⁷¹ Second, the increase of stylish living quarters with cafes, boutiques, galleries, and high priced apartment complexes

⁶⁷ Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, ‘Antrag der Fraktion der PDS über Geschichte im Stadtraum: Straßennamen-Ergänzungsschilder’ (Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, 27 April 1994).

⁶⁸ Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, ‘Straßenumbenennungen – hier Clara Zetking, Georgi Dimitroff, Nikolai Bersarin, Artur Becker und Hans Beimler’ (Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, 11 May 1995).

⁶⁹ ‘Dimitroffstraße wird beibehalten’, *Berliner Zeitung*, 29 April 1995.

⁷⁰ ‘Demokratisches Vorgehen?’, *Berliner Zeitung*, 11 November 1995.

⁷¹ Matthias Bernt and Andrej Holm, ‘Citizen and Local Government’, <http://www.difu.de/publikationen/citizens-and-local-government.html-5#topos1996> (accessed 1 March 2012).

attracted upper-middle-class residents with disposable incomes.⁷² With the influx of western investors who initiated a process of gentrification on a massive scale there was a massive increase in apartment rental rates and housing prices.⁷³ Rent rose with the increased demand for renovated, new housing. In turn, this drove many old renters, who lived off the subsidised housing benefits of the GDR system, to move to cheaper districts in the city.⁷⁴ As a result of the high unemployment and the increasing western influence, disgruntled citizens voted heavily for the PDS in the 1995 elections. The party received a greater increase of votes and seats in the Prenzlauer Berg BVV than in any other East Berlin *Bezirke*.⁷⁵ A correlation can be made between the PDS's increased voting percentage and an intensification of 'Ostalgie' in the district, as residents believed they were being ostracized in their own backyards.

The PDS and the 'positive' legacies of the GDR, 1993 – 1997

In spite of the street name changes in Prenzlauer Berg, the district effectively retained the majority of its former GDR street and square dedications. Forty-seven out of fifty-four commemorative names were retained in the *Bezirk*. Furthermore all parks named in the GDR era remained. The largest number of these dedications referred to communists, social democrats, Christians, and Protestants who stood up to the Third Reich. However nearly all of these commemorative names were to communist resistance fighters with strong affiliations to the KPD. Other than the few 'bad' communists who spoke out against Social Democrats in the Nazi era or were part of the SED, the SPD's agenda was not to remove all GDR dedications from Prenzlauer Berg's streetscape. A removal of all communists, especially those people who resisted against the Nazis, would have run counter to the SPD's overall politicised memory since 1945.

In contrast to the SPD's action, the CDU to some extent did propose to de-commemorate these names in their citywide campaign. For example, when the commemorative names in Mitte are considered, three streets survived the CDU's

⁷² Andreas Glaeser, *Political Epistemics: The Secret Police, the Opposition, and the End of East German Socialism* (Chicago, 2011), p. 346.

⁷³ Lisiak, p. 176.

⁷⁴ Matthias Bernt and Andrej Holm, (accessed 1 March 2012).

⁷⁵ Berlin-Brandenburg Wahlamt, 2010.

renaming phase that referred to communist resistance in Mitte. These dedications did not escape controversy however. As discussed earlier, the Niederkirchnerstraße, which was under immense scrutiny, had survived. Also under attack from the CDU and the Independent Commission was the Kapelleufer. The Independent Commission also recommended this street be deleted of the cityscape. Kapelleufer referred to Heinz Kapelle the director of the Communist Youth League of Germany (KJVD), who tried to organise German youths to rebel against the Nazi dictatorship. In the view of the CDU and the Independent Commission, his name needed to be removed from the cityscape. Despite this opposition the commemoration survived. Finally, Almstadtstrasse which is dedicated to Bernhard Almstadt is a unique case. While the Independent Commission did not recommend Almstadt's de-commemoration, in 1992 the CDU suggested that the street name be changed.⁷⁶ Some of these dedications were identical in Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg, such as those to Niederkirchner and Kapelle, but were not part of any proposal of de-commemoration in Prenzlauer Berg. From the point of view of the Christian Democrats, street and square names tainted with socialist and communist connotations had to be removed because only those against both National Socialism and communism were true heroes of the resistance.⁷⁷ Street names incompatible with this position had become overtly controversial in Mitte. Yet these names for the most part were remained unchanged in Prenzlauer Berg. When the CDU did rename streets dedicated to communist resistance fighters, like Artur Becker, opposing political actors such as the PDS and many ordinary citizens fought to preserve the relics of the GDR. Numerous ordinary citizens throughout Prenzlauer Berg and East Germany, as a result of these 'memory wars', began defiantly holding on to their distinctive East German identity and history. Many East Germans subscribed to a notion of 'Ostalgie' as they felt that they were being scrutinised by "know it better westerners" and had not fully reaped the benefits from the new freedoms of capitalism and democracy.⁷⁸ This does not mean that every East German wanted to return to the GDR or even retain most aspects of it. However, there were parts of the former East German state that people missed in their

⁷⁶ 'Lubitsch bekommt Strasse', *Die Tageszeitung*, 10 February 1992, p. 21.

⁷⁷ William Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past* (London, 2002), p. 78.

⁷⁸ Fulbrook, 1996, p. 294.

everyday existence in the new political structure, such as affordable housing and guaranteed employment.

A useful example of how political actors and ordinary citizens in Prenzlauer Berg fought over the ‘good’ and ‘bad’ parts of GDR memory manifested in commemorative names, was the debate on the Ernst-Thälmann-Park. The Thälmann Park was a major residential development scheme constructed in the middle of Prenzlauer Berg. Its development began in 1981 and it was officially opened in 1986.⁷⁹ Around 4,000 people, many of whom made up the GDR elite class, moved to the new sub-district of Prenzlauer Berg.⁸⁰ The park combined high-rise residential complexes, shopping, and recreational areas into a package of political symbolism. The entire area was dedicated to Ernst Thälmann, a staunch antifascist who became a victim of Nazism in 1944.⁸¹ Thälmann was murdered in the Buchenwald concentration camp after eleven years of imprisonment.⁸² Because of Thälmann’s record of antifascist activity and his leadership in the KPD, he was heralded as a martyr to the communist cause in the GDR state. Above all, he represented the heroism of the international communist movement against fascism. In the opinion of his supporters, Thälmann was a model “whom succeeding generations should follow in the battle for peace”.⁸³ Throughout East Germany, a number of memorials, plaques, schools and youth groups were named after him. One such youth group was the ‘*Ernst-Thälmann-Pioniere*’ [Pioneers], whose members would pledge their allegiance to Thälmann and socialism. Their motto was: “Ernst Thälmann is my model. I promise to learn to work and to fight as Ernst Thälmann teaches ... True to our greeting, I am always ready to support peace and socialism.”⁸⁴ Although Thälmann became a keystone figure in the antifascist narrative in the GDR, SED officials did not have a major memorial built to him prior an enormous space being dedicated on his behalf in

⁷⁹ Rudy Koshar, *From Monuments to Traces* (Berkeley, 2000), p. 278.

⁸⁰ Gawthrop and Holland, p. 176.

⁸¹ Volkhard Knigge, ‘Instead of a Foreword: The Case History of an Exhibition’, in Gedenkstätte Buchenwald (ed.), *Buchenwald Concentration Camp 1937 – 1945* (Göttingen, 2004), p. 10.

⁸² John Rodden, *Textbook Reds: schoolbooks, ideology, and Eastern German identity* (University Park, 2006), p. 34.

⁸³ Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 164.

⁸⁴ Wendy Tyndale, *Protestants in Communist East Germany: In the Storm of the World* (Burlington, 2010), p. 63.

Prenzlauer Berg. Included in the middle of the park was a twelve-meter high, fifty-five tonne bronze bust of Thälmann holding his clenched fist in the air in front of a waving flag.⁸⁵ The memorial and park were commemorated by Erich Honecker in 1986 on Thälmann's 100th birthday anniversary.⁸⁶ Like other communist fighters in Prenzlauer Berg remembered in commemorative names, Thälmann joined the pantheon of antifascist heroes venerated in Prenzlauer Berg's streetscape.

For all of Thälmann's 'positive' contributions to socialism and antifascism, his legacy after 1990 became much more complex. This resulted from the fact that Thälmann not only spoke out fervently against the dangers of Nazism and ran against Hitler in the last free elections of the Weimar Republic in 1932. However as the leader of the KPD from 1925 to 1933, he was also an opponent of the Weimar Republic. In the late 1920s and early 30s, Thälmann and the KPD had transformed into a loyal party of Stalinists who waited for their chance to start the proletarian revolution in Germany.⁸⁷ Additionally, Thälmann and the KPD's attitude towards Social Democrats may have led to the indirect rise of the Nazi Party. This argument can be made since the communists were totally unwilling to work with Social Democrats even at the time of Hitler's coming to power.⁸⁸ Instead, they placed the SPD on the same level as National Socialists members and called them 'social fascists' who were playing "the role of support of the bourgeoisie".⁸⁹ While Thälmann had been a victim and opponent of Nazism, he by no means fit the model of a pluralistic democrat.

Not surprisingly, a number of clashes over Ernst Thälmann's memory arose in the first years after German unity. The first controversy began in 1993 when the various political parties and ordinary citizens in the area debated whether or not the massive Thälmann statue should continue to exist. The CDU majority in the Senate appointed a

⁸⁵ Thomas Henry Elkins and Burkhard Hofmeister, *Berlin: the spatial Structure of a Divided City* (London, 1988), p. 246.

⁸⁶ Large, p. 562.

⁸⁷ Allan Merson, *Communist Resistance in Nazi Germany* (London, 1985), p. 73; Ladd, 1996, p. 202.

⁸⁸ Jean Palmier, *Weimar in exile: the Antifascist Emigration in Europe and America* (New York, 2006), p. 338.

⁸⁹ N. Laporte, 'Presenting Crisis as an Opportunity: The KPD and the Third Period, 1929 – 33', in Worley, Matthew (ed.), *In search of Revolution: International Communist Parties in the Third Period* (New York, 2004), p. 53.

committee to deal with the “political heritage of the communist era”.⁹⁰ The Commission recommended that the Senate demolish the memorial. Prior to the Senate’s announcement, ordinary citizens had begun to discredit the meaning of the statue. The dismissal of Thälmann and the former East German system was apparent as graffiti artists covered the base of the memorial with anti-GDR messages. One message mocked the SED’s funding of such a colossal monument as well as the fact that the enormous bust had survived the demise of the GDR. The message stated “Do you have it in a larger size?” As Tim Cresswell explains, the contexts of graffiti are different, but in “the authority of reclaiming urban space, it asserts the triumph of the individual over the monuments of authority.”⁹¹ In other words, ordinary citizens who could not openly voice their discontent with the socialist system during its existence expressed their pleasure at no longer having to live within it by defacing the surviving memento. In addition to the committee’s findings and those protestors in favour of discrediting the GDR, local councillors in Prenzlauer Berg also decided the huge statue should be removed.⁹² The SPD, the party with the largest number of representatives in the BVV, argued that the monument should be demolished and the area completely redesigned.⁹³ Similarly to the renaming of the Wihlem-Florin-Straße, the SPD had issues with Thälmann because of comments made by him that blamed the SPD for the rise of fascism in Germany. Rather than completely demolishing the monument as the SPD proposed, the CDU wanted to remove the statue and place it in a “hall of shame” with other similar GDR relics.⁹⁴ The PDS in contrast, believed that the monument had a place in Prenzlauer Berg and began a campaign called ‘Justice for Thälmann’.⁹⁵ In requesting the monument remain, the campaigners argued that the Nazis had murdered Thälmann and that he had warned citizens back in 1932, “those who vote Hindenburg vote Hitler and those who vote Hitler vote for war”.⁹⁶

⁹⁰ ‘Ernst Thälmann mit Tiefladern nach Bayern?’, *Die Tageszeitung*, 22 February 1993, p. 22.

⁹¹ Tim Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place* (Minneapolis, 1996), pp. 46 – 47.

⁹² Jens Sethmann, ‘25 Jahren, Ernst-Thälmann-Park’, *Tenant Magazine*, April 2011.

⁹³ Steffi Bey, ‘Varianten für das Denkmal an der Griefswalder Straße jetzt diskutiert Prenzlauer Berg: Schnecke oder Thälmann’, *Berliner Zeitung*, 29 January 1994.

⁹⁴ Neill, p. 88.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 88.

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 88.

Shortly after proceedings in the Prenzlauer Berg BVV and the Senate where some members had literally called for “the chopping off of Thälmann’s head”, protestors against the removal of the memorial began to appear in the park.⁹⁷ A number of young people who belonged to an anti-fascist group tied a red banner around the neck of the statue like a necktie in a symbolic gesture that made reference to the ‘*Ernst-Thälmann-Pioniere*’ uniform.⁹⁸ Additionally, elderly residents who lived in the Ernst-Thälmann-Park vented their anger and stated “the initial resistance was the beginning of a larger movement to save the memorial”.⁹⁹ Other local residents claimed the decision “came from western political parties that wanted to decide on our [East German] history”.¹⁰⁰

After two years, the protestors who argued Thälmann was part of the positive legacy and history of the GDR had won by default. Those who wanted the monument removed realised that the district did not have the money for demolition. The economic climate in Prenzlauer Berg was so dire, that for several weeks in 1992, the district could not afford to pay for the electricity to lighten the parks around the *Bezirk*, which included a large section of the Thälmann Park.¹⁰¹ In desperation, political parties in Prenzlauer Berg tried to donate the monument to a wealthy businessman from Bavaria who collected socialist-inspired statues.¹⁰² After his unexpected death, however, the district was left with the memorial in the centre of the park, meaning this part of Thälmann’s legacy remained.

To counter their inability to remove Ernst Thälmann’s memorial from the cityscape, CDU members proposed to rename the entire park in 1996. Christian Democrats argued the Ernst-Thälmann-Park should be relabelled the Cultural Park.¹⁰³ Dieter Stenger, the CDU’s Prenzlauer Berg BVV chairman, believed the Cultural Park title better reflected the concerns of the area and the interests of the people.¹⁰⁴ In the words of another CDU member, Karl Hennig, the “park’s name documented an alien culture”.¹⁰⁵ Hennig further

⁹⁷ ‘Teddy soll nicht geköpft werden’, *Die Tageszeitung*, 18 February 1993, p. 22.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

¹⁰¹ ‘Und es ward dunkel’, *Die Tageszeitung*, 9 August 1996, p. 23.

¹⁰² ‘Marx und Lenin für den Freizeitpark’, *Der Spiegel*, 25 October 1993.

¹⁰³ Henneke Mechthild, ‘CDU: Name Thälmann paßt nicht mehr’, *Berliner Zeitung*, 19 October 1996.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

argued that no other district in Berlin had such an “accumulation of East German artefacts in street and square name commemorations” than in Prenzlauer Berg.¹⁰⁶ The PDS asserted that the CDU was only continuing its campaign to get rid of everything from the GDR era. PDS members stated that the CDU “probably wants the district [Prenzlauer Berg] swept over to the Chancellor” in order to redesign the cityscape in line with the CDU’s position on the past.¹⁰⁷ On Thälmann’s 111th birthday celebration, the PDS asked supporters to lay flowers at the base of the Thälmann memorial and recognise his opposition to fascism.¹⁰⁸ A placard laid against the statue read: “Thälmann is very strong, much stronger than his tormentors that would like to see him disappear.”¹⁰⁹ In contrast to the distinct positions of the CDU and the PDS, the SPD reacted in a very different way than it did when the party demanded the removal of the Thälmann monument from the park. Social Democrats responded by stating that “there was no need for quick-fix actions”.¹¹⁰ Additionally, the party argued that the BVV should survey the population of Prenzlauer Berg to decide on the name change, especially those residents who lived in the residential complexes in the park.¹¹¹ The SPD had changed its position towards Thälmann’s dedication as a result of losing five council seats in the Prenzlauer Berg BVV and not wanting to risk further discontent in the electorate.

Unlike earlier cases against renaming proposals in Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg, ordinary citizens were not complaining about the lack of democratic processes in the renaming schemes, but the attack on their memory of the GDR era. A number of ordinary citizens who spoke out against the renaming were residents of the Thälmann residential park. According to GEWOBA, the housing association that manages the complex, statistics recorded in 2010 showed that nearly a quarter of the tenants were the original occupants from 1986.¹¹² Additionally, figures show that typically 8 per cent of the entire population living in the housing complex moved out each year.¹¹³ If the average

¹⁰⁶ Jens Rübsam, ‘Prenzlberg CDU will Teddy ans Fell’, *Die Tageszeitung*, 25 October 1996, p. 23.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

¹⁰⁸ PDS Prenzlauer Berg, ‘Ernst Thälmann’s Geburtstag’, *PDS Prenzlauer Berg Zeitung*, 16 April 1997.

¹⁰⁹ ‘Thälmann ist starker als seine Peiniger’, *Die Tageszeitung*, 18 April 1997, p. 22.

¹¹⁰ Henneke Mechthild, 19 October 1996.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² Jens Sethmann, *Tenant magazine*, April 2011.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

population change over a thirteen-year span is considered, it is estimated the original tenants from the GDR era made up more than half the population at the Thälmann residential park at the time of the dispute. The original occupants of the apartment complex consisted of elderly pensioners of the GDR state, civil servants, GDR elites, and other employed workers.¹¹⁴ A further argument can be made that these people would have been more sympathetic to retaining Thälmann's name as a positive contribution from the GDR era. For example, one citizen who resided in the area went to the BVV to voice his dismay and stated that "we live in the residential complex and it was named after a great leader, who died for the working class."¹¹⁵ He believed that the CDU "had only called for the renaming to strengthen its own perspective on the past."¹¹⁶ Others asked, "why should the park be renamed now?"¹¹⁷ Hundreds of other citizens, who lived in the Thälmann Park, sent Dieter Stenger letters requesting him to drop the CDU's proposal to rename the park.¹¹⁸

The survey went ahead even though a number of residents voiced their discontent with the renaming. Mayor Kraetzer was not entirely convinced about the outpouring of support to keep the Thälmann Park name dedication. As a result, he contended that an official review must proceed in order to determine whether the citizens actually wanted the change.¹¹⁹ The PDS therefore sent out thousands of pre-stamped postcards to all the residents in the complex. Within days of the mailing, 2,893 people replied to the district council voicing their views. Two thousand, eight hundred and thirty-three wanted to retain the name and sixty residents proposed a new name. One suggestion was 'Planetary Park', which made reference to the planetarium located there.¹²⁰ The magnitude of positive responses for the preservation of the park's name confirmed the PDS's claim that the Ernst-Thälmann-Park be retained as a 'positive' memory from the GDR era. However, the PDS-sponsored postcards caused a significant amount of controversy. After the BVV had received over 3,000 postcards, Kraetzer took it upon himself to discredit the

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ *Die Tageszeitung*, 25 October 1996, p. 23.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 23.

¹¹⁷ Karin Schmidl, 'Name für Ernst-Thälmann-Park gesucht', *Berliner Zeitung*, 1 September 1997.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ *Die Tageszeitung*, 18 April 1997, p. 22.

postcards because he believed that the PDS had interfered with them and forged the opinions of the local residents.¹²¹ Out of the 3,000 responses, 180 postcards were investigated for forgery. While the PDS denied all charges of voter tampering, members of the party did admit that some handwriting might look similar because they had written on the card to aid elderly voters.¹²² Regardless of the capacity in which the PDS assisted some voters, the cards were eventually submitted as evidence to keep the name of the park because Kraetzer had broken a statute in the Berlin Data Protection Act. This statute stated that it is illegal to transfer any personal information to the police unless the person concerned had broken a law.¹²³ Mayor Eberhard Diepgen, the Senate and the Berlin courts argued that Kraetzer's actions were illegal because the citizens had not broken any laws. Ironically, the CDU's verdict on the postcards had in turn decided the fate of the renaming of the Ernst-Thälmann-Park. With the overwhelming support of the residents, the PDS with the help of other minority parties in the BVV voted in favour of retaining the park's name.

Interpreted using a *textual* approach, the Ernst-Thälmann-Park represented a juxtaposition of the varying political stances on how to recount the past. Multiple underlying themes were attached to the park's name and the memorial located there. In the era of the GDR, the massive statue of Ernst Thälmann was part of the socialist inspired kitsch that attempted to strengthen the authority of East German socialism and bolster the state's claims of legitimacy. Above all, Thälmann's image and name were attached to the SED's victim and resistance narrative of antifascism. The history associated with the memorial and name changed however after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Three competing stories emerged. First, that Ernst Thälmann represented an anti-democratic legacy that no longer had a place in a unified Germany. Second, that the name and memorial symbolised everything that was wrong with East German socialism, such as the Berlin Wall, the Stasi, and authoritarian style dictatorship. Third, that Ernst Thälmann personified a counter-narrative to the previous two statements. Instead the park

¹²¹ 'Bürgermeister unter Druck', *Die Tageszeitung*, 13 May 1997, p. 22.

¹²² Jens Rübsam, 'Ernst oder nicht', *Die Tageszeitung*, 24 April 1997, p. 28.

¹²³ PDS Prenzlauer Berg, 16 April 1997.

name and memorial embodied the ‘positive’ qualities that were found in the former socialist system, including health care, full employment, and affordable housing.

The *arena* metaphor emphasises how commemorative names throughout Berlin represented the struggle between the competing political parties in dealing with the immediate past as well as the history of the Nazi era. Additionally, the Ernst-Thälmann-Park was another way to create an overarching post-socialist national identity and memory. The CDU attempted to legitimise the new Berlin Republic by deleting the remnants of the GDR system, especially dedications to people like Ernst Thälmann and Clara Zetkin who represented the socialist spirit. However, unlike its previous attempts to rename dedications in Berlin, the CDU did not refer to a Prussian narrative when proposing to change the name given to the Ernst-Thälmann-Park. Instead, Christian Democrats wanted to separate the GDR memory and replace it with a name that did not make reference to any specific epoch of history. Conversely, the SPD did not propose a new name. However, Social Democrats did not want to continue with the dedication to Ernst Thälmann because of his statements against the SPD in the Nazi era. The PDS, on the other hand, argued that the de-commemoration of Ernst Thälmann was an attack on East German values and memory created in the era of the GDR.

While the political parties re-interpreted and argued over the Ernst Thälmann dedication as being a place to create their version of politicised memory, public space as Maya Nadkarni argues, is another “site to produce personal meaning, which inspires not only anger, but also indifference, irony, or affection”.¹²⁴ The amount of *performance* associated with the Ernst-Thälmann-Park expresses the varying opinions towards the dedication. The graffiti that covered the Thälmann bust was a form of rejection of the dedication’s existence as well as the history of the former East German state. Yet, others in the district found solace in the Ernst Thälmann statue and name. Ordinary citizens demanded the name and statue remain as a reminder of their experience in the GDR and a way to escape the unfamiliarity of the new capitalist system of a unified Germany.

¹²⁴ Maya Nadkarni, ‘Making the past in Budapest’s Statue Park Museum’, in Hodgkins, Katharine and Radstone, Susannah (eds.), *The Politics of Memory* (New York, 2003), p. 199.

Unlike in Mitte, Prenzlauer Berg continued to dedicate commemorative names to the heroes from the socialist era. The existing street, square, and park names in Prenzlauer Berg acted as a counter-narrative to the one formed in Mitte in the immediate years after German unity. Prenzlauer Berg had been one of the most active areas of rebellion and opposition to the SED government in the later years of the GDR. The unification for many seemed like a new beginning in which the negative aspects of East German society would be deleted or left behind. The overall political, economic, and social climates of the district after German unity, however, were so turbulent that many citizens were forced to look at parts of the past that they considered to be the ‘positive’ memories of the GDR. This change in attitude is seen in the voting patterns of the district, as the SPD, a West German Party, had first won overwhelming support in the district’s first BVV election. In 1995, however, the PDS increased its votes more in Prenzlauer Berg than any other district in Berlin. As a result of the positions taken by ordinary citizens and the PDS towards the past, Prenzlauer Berg’s street, square, and park names looked almost identical before and after 1989.

Concluding remarks

This thesis proposed to examine the history behind the names, naming, and renaming of streets, squares, and parks in post-socialist Berlin. As an issue of *res publica*, there might have been an expectation that in so doing a single underlying historical theme would be uncovered. There may be one. However, what this thesis has revealed is that commemorative names are part of a complex process of storytelling about the past. There are multiple ways in which the history attached to these dedications can be told. As such, these commemorations do not just offer one story. Instead, numerous narratives, which accumulate over time, are given voice through commemorative names located throughout the cityscape. The very fact that there are different versions of names given to objects, which refer to the Prussian, Nazi and GDR eras of German history, shows that Berlin is a multi-layered text to which very different authors with conflicting perspectives have contributed. Political parties and ordinary citizens have taken contrasting positions on what street and square names should be, how they should be interpreted, and what kind of narrative they should ultimately tell. This type of interpretation may sound postmodern, but perhaps just reveals the complexity of the ideas, narratives, and meanings that

become attached to street, square, and park dedications. These are genuine histories that affected real people and institutions. By reading the cityscape in the metaphorical lenses of *text*, *arena*, and *performance*, these dedications reveal that there are multiple interpretations, discourses, and actions that have been intertwined in the process of naming and re-naming. In essence, street, square, and park names are one part of how society re-interprets itself for the needs of the present.

This thesis has uncovered stories that are part of three strands of history. It is meaningful to examine these histories that in some cases overlap. First, there is a political history. Changes to the political institutions directly after the demise of the GDR forced a re-conceptualisation of how to define the German nation-state. Many of the questions of national identity and memory revolved around the country's double past of Nazism and East German socialism. Commemorative names were part of the ideological struggle between political parties on how to publicly define a national identity and memory in a unified Germany. The success of communicating a political party's version of the past was determined by the amount of authority, legitimacy, and power that a party obtained in the various levels of national and local administrations. When the CDU had power it created a narrative that bypassed the unfavourable political histories attached to the Nazi and GDR eras and instead, used street and square names to promote a sense of 'positive' German nationalism in reference to the Prussian past. In contrast the SPD continued its position of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* [coming to terms with the past] by attaching names to dedications that explicitly referred to the victims of and resisters against the Third Reich. On the other hand the PDS attacked all attempts to re-write the pasts of the Nazi era and any undoing of the 'positive' legacies of East German socialism. Decisions on how to represent the nation's history were often determined by the political parties that had the power to impose their version of politicised memory on the landscape, but these decisions were not accepted without considerable debate. The shaping of the German past was contentious among the political parties because of the implications for Germany's future.

Second, this thesis has highlighted a social history attached to commemorative names in East Berlin. In particular, it has shown how the naming and re-naming of streets,

squares, and parks affected ordinary citizens' lives. A number of competing narratives of personal history emerged as people attached their own specific meanings to commemorative names. The differing reactions of ordinary citizens, who resided in Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg, provided an indication on how East Germans reacted to a new and sometimes uncertain existence in a unified Germany. Values that had been created in the GDR's forty years of existence were challenged daily in the transition to a democratic and capitalistic system. Resistance to the new names showed an open hostility to the rapid changes affecting everyday lives. In contrast to the reactions of numerous East Germans, many West Germans could not identify with the values attached to the inherited socialist names and discredited their importance in society.

Third, this thesis argues that a cultural history is present in commemorative names. Names present in public life are tied to a cultural understanding of the past that give it collective meaning. Commemorative names represented the beliefs, practices, and symbolic representations of people's perceptions of the world they lived in. The power struggle over who had the right to shape the memorial landscape was therefore a clash between Right and Left, West and East.

Commemorative names are 'sites of memory'. They are created out of the political, social, and cultural constructions of modern day society that are manipulated and changed over time. The purpose of these 'sites of memory', as Nora argues, is "to stop time, to block the work of forgetting".¹²⁵ Yet, what this thesis has demonstrated is that the construction and de-construction of 'sites of memory' is much more complex. These markers in the landscape do not only attempt to remember what has already happened, but they also impose a will to forget. Commemorative names therefore, undergo constant evaluation because there are numerous conflicting perspectives on how to publicly exhibit the past. Dedications will always be subjected to analysis as stories are edited, deleted, and additional representative voices make claims to the spaces in the physical landscape. As a result of this constant negotiation, political parties and ordinary citizens reach a crossroad, figuratively and literally, in each generation about how they should

¹²⁵ Pierre Nora, 'Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Memoire*', Marc Roudebush (trans.), *Representations*, 26 (Spring 1989), p. 19.

deal with the histories attached to dedications in the memorial landscape. As William Faulkner wrote, "the past isn't dead. It's not even past."¹²⁶

¹²⁶ William Faulkner, *Requiem for a Nun* (London, 1957), p. 85.

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